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Transformations of the military profession and professionalism in Scandinavia

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Introduction

Anne Roelsgaard Obling & Lotta Victor Tillberg

This collection brings together essays concerned with the military profession and professionalism in Denmark, Norway and Sweden – theoretical and empirical studies of professional value systems, professional roles, professional logics, professional development and professional education and training.

European militaries have changed, in some ways quite profoundly, since the end of the Cold War (Edmunds, 2006; King, 2011; Segal & Burke, 2012; Edmunds, Dawes, Higate, Jenkins, & Woodward, 2016). Notwithstanding their differences, the Scandinavian countries are often considered to be similar in social structure, history and culture and to enjoy significant similarities in relation to welfare and defence policies and their political and military institutions (Knudsen & Rothstein, 1994). The military profession and professionalism in these countries, that is, have developed in remarkably similar contexts of reform and change. This edited collection attends to these similarities while acknowledging some significant differences.

The programme for the Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2021 has as one of its “fundamental theses” the proposition “we are stronger and wiser together than as individuals.” The shared aim is ambitious; together the Nordic countries will be the world’s most integrated and sustainable region (see the Nordic Council of Ministers’ website www.norgen.org). This perspective is one of many useful to the understanding and analysis of the formulation of the Nordic countries’ defence and security policies.

Denmark, Sweden and Norway have much in common in their geography, borders, labour, languages, welfare systems and, to a certain extent, culture. More, they are all relatively small states – a fact obliging them to manage scarce resources and to collaborate on matters benefitting from a united effort, such as joint purchases, research and the development of technology. They also share history (albeit a history experienced differently in each country: the Second World War is an example). With the end of the Cold War, the Scandinavian countries, geographically situated in a borderland and constituting an interdependent security region defined by the major fault line between Russia and NATO (Bengtsson, 2020, p. 102), have certain specific defence circumstances in common. Not surprisingly, they often agree on the security threat and the risk assessment for the region.

Despite these similarities, however, there are also differences. The Scandinavian countries chose different paths regarding strategic alliances and cooperation after the Second World War, with Denmark and Norway having a transatlantic orientation and Sweden choosing to remain outside NATO and to deepen its cooperation with Finland and the EU instead.

With its greater military contributions to international operations, Denmark sets itself apart from its northern neighbours. Between 1990 and 2018, the Danish parliament authorised troop deployments to 33 UN operations and 25 NATO operations. This Danish involvement in international operations represents “a sixfold increase over the period 1945–1989, when Denmark contributed to just 13 international military operations” (Mariager & Wivel, 2019, p. 4). While international missions were high on the agenda for the Norwegian and Swedish armed forces during this same period, they were not prioritised to the same extent. Rather, the strengthening of national defence forces and investment in a policy of civil–military “total defence” has been prioritised in recent years, a development explained by these countries’ geographical situation, with their long borders and proximity to Russia. Unlike its Swedish and Norwegian counterparts, the Danish government does not (yet) describe its defence policy in terms of total defence. The government’s current defence focus is on improving conventional forces to contribute to NATO’s collective defence efforts (Wither, 2020, p. 63).

The Military Professions in Scandinavia

The last decades have seen an upsurge of interest in the concept of *profession* within research on military organisation and military studies (Moskos, Williams & Segal, 2000; Evetts, 2003; Snider & Matthews 2005; Snider, 2015; Crosbie & Kleykamp, 2018; Finney & Mayfield, 2018). That the military itself has not

remained silent in this discussion is evident, for example, in the professional doctrine of the U.S. Army and Joint Force (U.S. Army, 2013) and the Australian review “Beyond Compliance” (Orme, 2011). Public inquiries following the long series of conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan have led to productive reflection on questions of military professionalism (FOI, 2016; Bornholdt Andersen, Klingenberg Vistisen & Schøning, 2016; Mariager & Wivel, 2019). Much inquiry seems to be embedded in traditional conceptions and discussions of professions outlined by Parsons (1953), Weber (1978), Freidson (1986) and Abbott (1988), and more specifically by Huntington (1957), Janowitz (1960), Hackett (1962) and Westmoreland (1970), among others.

In a Scandinavian context, two notable dimensions to interest in the military profession should be noted. The first is a rekindled questioning of the core roles, tasks and responsibility of military professionals, affected both by new types of conflict and by the changing nature of military engagements; the second concerns growing uncertainties related to managerial reforms, budgetary demands and the ongoing restructuring of military organisations.

In Denmark, for instance, the purpose and the functioning of the armed forces as an institution of government have been debated in relation to the publication of the Danish War Inquiry (Mariager & Wivel, 2019), while a number of scandals involving breaches of traditional public administrative virtues and responsibilities, among them the misuse of power, nepotism and eligibility, have negatively spotlighted the military profession. The scandals, it is argued, have led to public mistrust in the Danish armed forces and for calls for transparency, openness and a redefinition of military servants. More recently, the role of military officers as public servants has seen discussion – including that of Chief of Defence, a role the Danish defence minister described in public interviews as the “head of agency,” thereby kindling an apparently unending discussion of the nature and balance of civil-military relations. Debate about the role of Chief of Defence is rooted, in part, in a larger restructuring of the Danish Armed Forces, most recently in 2014. This restructuring, and the many reorganisations and budgetary prioritisations following in its wake, has provoked considerable tensions – both for the individual professional and for the institution as a whole.

In contrast, the Swedish debate on defence is characterised by a positive tailwind in public opinion. Across partisan lines there is an agreement to sharply increase defence funding, while the armed forces enjoy increasing trust from the public when compared to previous years (Berndtsson, Bjereld and Ydén, 2020, p. 350). Instead of engaging in downsizing, the Swedish Armed Forces can now be expanded by the establishment of new regiments in different parts of the country, among other things. Personnel redundancy is a thing of the past; the challenge

now is recruitment and the filling of positions. In the spring of 2021, the Swedish Supreme Commander Micael Bydén was awarded “Manager of the Year” – an award presented to “highlight and reward good examples among Sweden’s managers and to spread their message about good leadership” (see www.chef.se).

Like Sweden, Norway has returned its focus from international missions to the defence of its home territory. New security policy assessments noting Russian influence operations, for example, have led to a debate on how defence should be designed to best meet expectations and needs. In the ongoing debate, the relevance of traditional national armed forces with the full range of land, air and naval power is questioned and new solutions suggesting a more internationally integrated framework have been presented (Norwegian Ministry of Defence, 2020).

The essays in this volume examine what characterises the development and transformation of the military profession in Scandinavia. We view ongoing reforms of military organisations as being implemented in response to new global security threats and new types of military operations, on one hand, and as an effect of transformations of the welfare state (including attempts to modernise and reform the public sector) on the other. The contributions here return often to the consequences for the military profession of existing in this context of separate but interrelated tendencies.

In line with other recent work on the subject, these essays argue that questions of profession must be raised closely in tandem with a consideration of the new forms taken by professions in their organisational and socio-political context (see also Ackroyd, 1996; 2016; Edmunds et al., 2016; Saks, 2016). The social transformations of the military profession and professionalism cannot be understood by reference solely to the military or to the relationship between soldiers and mission training, generals and command traditions, or to other internal forces obtaining within the military organisation. As the development of military institutions takes place within broader fields of social structure and power, it should be assumed that armed forces are reshaped by broader societal changes – a fact compelling attention when approaching questions of profession. In recent years, there have been a number of studies addressing not only the changing character of professions but the implicit changing character of professional organisation itself, seeing these two dimensions as interrelated and dynamic; the chapters below draw on these studies.

The Expeditionary Era and the Afghanistan Experience

Sweden, Norway and Denmark have all recently had a military presence in Afghanistan, and the character of defence organisation and of debates concerning defence in Scandinavia must be understood in the light of this history. While

military organisations in the region assumed a more visible public role following the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, they did not function as each nation's territorial defence but as an "expeditionary capability" with Swedish, Norwegian and Danish boots on the ground a long way from home. In each country, this was highlighted in different ways with various consequences. It can be said that none of the countries view their military mission in Afghanistan to be an unequivocal success; in many instances, the opposite is true. With its high level of commitment, and the attendant consequences, Denmark stands out from the other Scandinavian countries. During Denmark's involvement in Afghanistan between 2002 and 2014, it contributed the most troops, with 19,199 soldiers deployed, and suffered the most casualties with 214 wounded and 43 killed (Danish Defence, 2020). During the same period, Norway's troop contribution was approximately 9,000, with 10 killed (NOU, 2016, p. 10); Sweden's was just over 8,000, with 6 fatalities (SOU, 2017, p. 217).

The consequences of what was experienced in Afghanistan manifest themselves differently in each country, something also noticeable in the chapters below. It seems that in Norway and Denmark, a more heated discussion about war fighting and being part of a warrior culture has made its way into public debate. In Sweden, on the other hand, the discussion has been more about Afghanistan as a humanitarian rather than a military project. The Afghan missions have undoubtedly influenced internal military discourse and the ways in which soldiers perceive their professional identity – an issue developed in this collection by Randrup Pedersen, whose chapter problematises the "warriorisation of Danish military professions" (see chapter 4). These changes in professional self-understanding also inform Høiback's chapter, in which he relates how "a whole new breed of young officers returned home with completely different stories to tell to those of their older peers. The professionalism, the gravity and seriousness among the lower levels increased significantly" (see chapter 5). While this relationship has attracted some attention in Sweden, the attendant debate has not been as intense and public as in Norway and Denmark. In Swedish official terminology, for example, there is no concept of "war veteran," only "veteran" or "overseas veteran." This does not, however, prevent Swedish veterans from calling themselves war veterans (Victor Tillberg, Tillberg, Naeve-Bucher & Svartheden, 2020). The theme of the distinction between the military's internal discourse and the societal, external discourse on both the military profession and professionalism recurs throughout this volume.

The chapters in this book can be read against this general outline. Most of them have the military profession in the authors' home countries as their primary points of reference. They also share an understanding that transformation and change in the profession are deeply context-dependant. This illustrates an im-

portant point about known types of public sector professions: they continuously reflect on their professional development projects and negotiate their way between public interests and interests of the welfare state. These factors and organisational forms explain much about the systems of the profession under scrutiny (Ackroyd, 2016). Setting out from a number of different theoretical and practical perspectives, the chapters examine facts and phenomena relevant to the present and the future of the military profession. Together, the authors also embody a broad range of experience and viewpoints, from the military insider's perspective to the outsider's perspective rooted in political science, epistemology, sociology, ethnology, history and organisation theory.

Outline of the Collection

The remainder of this introduction outlines the contributors' work. Several chapters describe the ways in which change is driven in both the military organisation and the profession. The "expeditionary era experience," emerging from new conflict types and a changing context of military engagements, can be understood as a phenomenon with significant effects on military professions. Other influencing factors are the defence organisations' efforts to modernise the armed forces and to achieve greater public appeal. Slogans like "Come as you are" or "Everybody is needed in a strong defence" follow an international trend, which has greatly impacted both policy development and individual motivations to enlist. All the Scandinavian countries are making efforts to build modern, effective, inclusive and gender-neutral defence forces. Several areas of tension arise here – something also noticeable in the authors' different starting points.

One field of tension deals with policy work and how ideas of the professional are organised into discourses. In Joakim Berndtsson's chapter "Sweden and 'Our Military Profession': Building a Common Identity or Creating Friction?", Berndtsson describes the Swedish Armed Forces' attempt to develop a common military identity using a policy adopted in 2017 entitled *Vår militära profession: agerar när det krävs* – "our military profession – action when action is required" (Försvarsmakten, 2017). The policy, the first of its kind in Sweden, conveys a broad understanding of the military profession, including civilian employees, soldiers, sailors, NCOs and officers of all branches. The ambition is for the policy to create a common, organisation-wide understanding of the military profession that bridges the "civilian-military divide"; Berndtsson's study shows that this is not a simple task. The findings indicate a complex and potentially fraught relationship between policy-level conceptions and self-images among Swedish officers. The attempt by the Swedish Armed Forces to regulate and govern identity through a central

narrative appears to have generated resistance and friction. The Association of Swedish Officers clearly rejects the constitutive norms around membership of “our military profession,” a reluctance evident among Staff Programme officers as well. Even though the policy clearly distinguishes between “our military profession” and the “officer profession,” the move to create a collective identity is seen as distorting officers’ professional self-images founded on ideas about, and relational boundaries around, a unique expertise, a specific jurisdiction and distinct sources of status and legitimacy. Berndtsson finds that the all-inclusive concept of “our military profession” is not a strong, shared cognitive model or discourse around which members build professional self-images.

Another perspective on policy implementation is highlighted in Beate Sløk Andersson and Alma Persson’s chapter “Letting the Right Ones In: Gendered Boundary Work in the Military Profession.” The authors examine how a gender perspective is crucial when trying to understand the current redefinition of the military profession. With the Danish military as its empirical focal point, the chapter explores how perceptions of professionalism are embedded in the negotiation of women’s access and inclusion to military professions. The analysis takes as its point of departure the claim that, through certain historical processes, professions develop subtle cultural codes defining whether and how individuals are perceived to be suitable for membership. The chapter approaches the reluctance to see women as insiders to the military profession as an expression of *boundary work*, a term which builds on the research of the military scholar Kenneth T. MacLeish (2015), who argues that the divide between a military and civilian sphere is the product of a “constant policing, performing, and imagining of the boundaries between in and out” rather than an actual and tangible divide (MacLeish 2015, p. 17). Based on ethnographic fieldwork in the borders of the Danish military, the chapter thus unfolds certain mechanisms working to uphold boundaries around the profession founded on assumptions about gender while being gendered in their consequences. The authors conclude their study by stating that changes in gender dynamics within and around the military profession reflect changes in military work itself. The chapter illuminates how a gender lens can make visible unspoken and problematic ideas about the military profession and professionalism governing inclusion and recognition in the military profession.

In the chapter “Intergenerational Conflicts and Military Leadership: A Problem of Generations in Danish Military Education and Beyond,” Roelsgaard Obling’s study of an elite military education brings to light certain challenges in relation to soldiers’ experiences of war, professionalism and learning and a more general problem of generations. The chapter uses the notion of the “generational unit” (Mannheim, 1952) to understand the participants in the programme as a

particular analytical entity bound together by shared problems and conflicts. In sharp contrast to earlier periods, this group of military officers have practiced their profession in actual combat. The group is now progressing through the ranks of the organisational hierarchy, including managerial positions. Roelsgaard Obling points out a growing gap between the specialised experiential knowledge, values and interests of the generational unit and those of the older and younger generations in the military organisation. The chapter argues that, while dividing lines between generations in the Danish Armed Forces have always existed, those lines now appear as potential lines of internal conflict. Applying a generational perspective, the chapter offers a way to consider and to empirically explore social change and progress, presenting a way to analyse the processes of generation-related struggles and conflicts serving to shape and transform the organisations in which they occur.

In the chapter “Facing the Warrior – An Ethnographic Montage on Post-9/11 Warriorisation of Danish Military Professions,” Thomas Randrup Pedersen explores the rising “warriorisation” of the Danish military profession following 9/11 and analyses the reconfigurations of the military ethos, professional identity and professionalism bound up with Denmark’s military engagements in Afghanistan (2002–2014) and Iraq (2003–2011). Through the composition of an “ethnographic montage,” the chapter mixes fieldwork data with discursive material on the growing “warriorisation” within three spheres: the Danish Armed Forces at large, organisations supporting Danish war veterans, and popular cultural products that thematise recent military adventures. The author argues that the notion of “the warrior” is a cultural figure with both variations and different meanings in different contexts, together presenting different implications for the Danish military profession. Well after the conclusion of the last Danish combat operation in Helmand, it appears to be increasingly attractive to identify as a “warrior” – a notion laden with moral, emotional and masculine significance, opening “gaps,” or fields of tension, between inclusion and exclusion along normative lines such as virtuousness and wickedness, heroism and villainism, sacrifice and self-centredness, bravery and brutality, passion and frenzy, education and experience, competency and potency. Randrup Pedersen’s chapter questions the emergence of “the warrior” as a significant component of a military professional identity through a consideration of the trope as complex, contested and morally ambivalent. He concludes his study positing that the use of the “warrior” trope within the military profession must lead to critical self-reflection for both the individual soldier and the organisation at large.

In the chapter “The Multidimensional Transformation of the Norwegian Military Profession: From National Duty to Individual Rights,” Harald Høiback

investigates the development of the Norwegian military. Using a comparative historical lens, the chapter first describes the state of the Norwegian military profession in 1995 and 2020, respectively, before comparing the two in order to ascertain what has changed and what has remained the same. The investigation begins with concepts of expertise, responsibility and corporateness proposed by Huntington (1957). For Høiback, the Norwegian military of 1995 was big, “folksy,” and focused on territorial defence, a legacy from the country’s catastrophic military unpreparedness for the German invasion of 1940; analysing what has changed in recent decades, the chapter describes several simultaneous processes, from top-down to bottom-up and, finally, outside-in. By 2020, a rather large share of the members of the armed forces had acquired personal combat experience, and even more officers had gained experience from overseas operations in different capacities. Høiback observes that professionalism and seriousness on the lower levels increased significantly, which has resulted in more realistic and meticulous training. At the same time, however, on the strategic level, Høiback argues that the military has become de-militarised in the upper echelons of the institution’s hierarchy and that it is now just one of many subfields in the governmental administration. Here, the analysis is also relevant to contemporary Danish discussions about the political and military top brass and, more specifically, the relationship between them.

Lotta Victor Tillberg’s chapter “Mastering Both: The Planned and the Unforeseen” is an epistemological investigation of Swedish military professionalism based on research into Swedish military professional skills and interviews conducted with officers. In recent decades, military scholars have drawn attention to myriad unconventional challenges and demands placed on military commanders at all levels. Using a set of epistemological concepts, Victor Tillberg’s chapter presents an analytical framework that focuses on the types of knowledge that an officer needs in order to act professionally and to master the various demands made upon them. Two theoretical perspectives are borrowed from Ellström (1997): the concept of *competence-in-use* and a distinction between *theoretical/explicit knowledge* and *experience-based/implicit know-how* (Ellström 1997, p. 45). The investigation shows that as a consequence of changed tasks, role expansion and increasing demands, the officer’s ability to master both a public administration and a military logic is tested and that new forms of horizontal and vertical cooperation are required. This, in turn, creates problems and internal tensions. Dependencies change both within the organisation and in relation to the outside world and other actors. Victor Tillberg finds that this development calls for new explanatory models. The findings show that the officers place themselves in one of two different mental landscapes (topoi): some officers view themselves as “warrior-adminis-

trators” while others view themselves as “warriors, not administrators” – two distinct, often clashing, identities. By identifying a gap between officers’ perceptions of the two identified mental landscapes, Victor Tillberg calls for advancements of the forms of knowledge connected to officers’ competence-in-use, with a focus on the *doing*: the constant movement between theory and practice.

Karl Ydén’s chapter “Unpacking the ‘Military Profession’ Concept: Accounting for Variations in Military Organising” pays attention to how we understand the contemporary military profession in a Swedish context characterised by change – external, environmental changes (the post-Cold War internalisation of the Swedish armed forces, for example) and internal, educational changes (for example, the academisation of junior officers’ education and curriculum). The chapter first discusses which factors contribute to a new focus on the concept of a “military profession” in Sweden. Quotation marks are used here to show that it is misleading to understand military officers as belonging to a single profession. One plausible practical effect of insisting on one profession is an army-centric officer education. Arguing for professions (in contrast to *a* profession) includes recognising the considerable variety of contexts and competences within the military organisation, understood as a highly “complex organisation” (Perrow 1986) consisting of different officer categories with different skill sets and logics of action.

This conceptualisation brings with it some analytical challenges, however, including the matter of how the multifaceted nature of military organisation might be theorised and studied. To meet these challenges, Ydén develops a model of four logics, attending specifically to the differences and dynamics of the core tasks and functions of military organisations. The argument here is that, by collapsing the four logics (including peacetime logics and real-life counterparts), we easily dismiss the possibility of different legitimating strategies, skills systems and leadership activities existing side by side in the organisation, and the ways in which each logic needs to be taken into account when discussing the development of the military profession and a well-functioning, efficient organisation.

Morten Brænder’s chapter “The Military Profession Under Pressure” first considers historically important and theoretically distinct approaches to the military profession. Departing from a number of important theoretical differences and modes of analysis, the chapter then suggests a transition from understanding military professionals as managers of violence to understanding them as security experts – a change of focus calling for the pursuit of a wider security expertise perspective (see Eyal, 2013; Libel, 2019) rather than the perspective of a more limited, self-sustaining profession. This choice of approach may offer the benefit of helping us to widen our focus when studying the relation between the military or security sectors and society, enabling us to draw on expertise beyond the boundaries of the

military profession. The chapter also discusses an ongoing, and somewhat charged, debate about the “rotten” culture in the Danish armed forces and associated calls for reform, raising deep tensions between the military and civil society and in the military itself. The chapter further demonstrates how theories of professions and professionalisms are especially apt for analysing what Macdonald (1995) has referred to as the “regulative bargain” between profession and the state.

Vilhelm Stefan Holsting’s chapter “The Dynamics of Professional Values in Officership: A Study of 300 Years of Officer Performance Evaluation Systems” continues the theme of viewing the military profession as a profession defined by a process of constant adaption. The chapter offers a historical account of the changing values of officership, drawing empirically on Danish archives of 3000 written performance evaluations of individual officers from the three branches – army, navy and air force. The author views societal changes as catalysts for concomitant changes in military values, identifying how these values have transformed from the earliest performance evaluation reports in the 17th century to more recent reports in 2007. This transformation takes place not through a reluctant acceptance of civil values but “through a more active and engaged process, which reshapes professional functionality and legitimacy.” Applying Boltanski and Thevenot’s original work on orders of worth (2006), Holsting develops an analytical framework consisting of ten values that correspond to the performance evaluation reports. The author finds that the values embedded in the performance system adapt to new requirements (“agile,” “flexible,” “pro-active”) while still upholding classic military values (“polite,” “efficient,” “well-educated,” “obedient,” and so on). One of the peculiar qualities of the military profession is, then, its ability to absorb new values and narratives into deeply traditional structures and relationships.

In the chapter “Twisting the Pedagogy in Military Education: Experiences Drawn From a Problem-Based Teaching Approach at the Norwegian Defence University College,” Bandlitz, Sookermany and Isaksen deal explicitly with the new missions undertaken by military organisations and approach these changes as a call for adjustment of pedagogic methods in military training and education. The authors argue that there exists a gap between current pedagogical methods and the operational environment and thus identify a mismatch between the principles and skills in existing military education and the actual analytical skills and knowledge required to plan and execute military operations. The chapter describes a pilot project which employs “problem-based learning” at the Norwegian Defence College and finds, importantly, that problem-based learning principles such as extensive group work and self-directed learning may have a positive effect on the development of problem-solving skills and the cultivation of collaborative

skill sets. The chapter argues that these skills are especially valuable for the application of mission command and the planning and conduct of operations, which, the authors emphasise, are the cornerstones of the military profession.

Thus, well-known pedagogical methods from civil institutions of higher learning are here adapted and implemented in a military master's education to align learning outcomes with environmental demands. Academisation through the transformation of an existing educational program results in professionalisation rather than de-professionalisation. To be able to meet security demands in the 21st century, the authors argue that training and education of the officer corps must undergo a number of changes, not least in terms of implementing experimenting pedagogical methods.

Final Thoughts on the Future of the Military Profession

An underlying question running through the various chapters of this book is about the very existence of armed forces. Why does a country need a defence? What should it be used for? And how should it be designed? The chapters in this volume show that there are multiple approaches to these existential questions, and that each nation's way of addressing them differs, too. Military work is a professional activity often hidden away from public scrutiny, a fact which applies equally to military activities within national borders and during international operations. While a collection of essays like this cannot dissolve the boundary between those inside an organisation and those outside, it can certainly reduce the distance between them, increasing understanding. This is one of the aims driving the project.

In this collection, ten researchers with deep insight into and experience of the military have reflected on the position and challenges of the Scandinavian armed forces. One may, perhaps, expect to discover an overall claim to unity and coherence, or common answers to the pressing questions concerning the military profession, including that of the future social and political role for the armed forces and the models of military professionalism and efficiency appropriate to the Scandinavian context. But, as the reader will realise, a series of studies on the processes governing stability and change in the military profession cannot claim any more or less coherence than the very phenomena under investigation. The chapters in this collected edition demonstrate a number of competing directions and values, gaps and disconnections within the profession and between military organisations and the environment. We have preserved the heterogeneity of analyses, and the divergent results these analyses yield, to evince the diverse nature of the phenomena under study.

If an overall conclusion of this volume's contribution were to be offered,

however, it might be the following: when the traditional understanding of war and defence no longer applies to borders and territory, new forms of organising, training and leadership are required. Here, the ability to act collectively, not least through international joint military missions, has proven increasingly important. The ability to *cooperate* in a broad sense and on all levels, both between individuals, units and organisations, and between countries, is a crucial factor in the solution of tasks. At the time of writing, the need for a total defence solution is a basic strategic given in all of Scandinavian countries. This need exposes a series of horizontal and vertical challenges to which each nation is required to find answers; frictionless cooperation with the institutions of the surrounding society appears to become ever more important. In the light of the COVID-19 pandemic, specific challenges and vulnerabilities in the structures of society have become painfully obvious. This development also raises the question of public support, representativeness and legitimacy with regard to the armed forces of all the Scandinavian countries. The various contributions in this collection shed light on gaps, contradictions and issues of decoupling that the armed forces need to address if they are to continue to develop the military profession and professionalism.

What emerges, therefore, are only glimpses of the transformation of the military profession in Scandinavia. It seems that every new mode of analysis brings with it new ways of asking questions and of approaching the inquiry, thereby revealing new and unexplored sides of the topic. This also means that the inquiry does not end here; further attention needs to be paid to a series of questions within and across critical areas of the development of the military profession, including, but not limited to, the following:

First, the operational context of the profession is changing – a fact which places different challenges and demands on the military profession and the institution as a whole. How does the profession embrace a changed professional environment and the requirements (diversity, flexibility, contextual multiplicity) emerging from this? How does it extend its body of knowledge to meet new demands and challenges without losing its core strengths and values?

Second, when caught between mixed and often contradictory expectations, professionals often report increased stress and low work satisfaction. Senior officers warn of overstretched and under-resourced organisations; some services struggle to meet basic recruitment requirements. How do military institutions preserve a balance between continual change and an efficient organisation? Faced with public sector reforms and increased regulations, military professions confront administrative and political directives directly impacting their work. Are the military professions weakened in this process, as we see with professions elsewhere? And if so, to what degree?

Third, literature about post-bureaucracy and neo-bureaucracy highlights how classical bureaucratic structures and values blend with entrepreneurial or market-oriented structures and values (du Gay, 2008; Sturdy, Wright & Wylie, 2016; Lopdrup-Hjort and Roelsgaard Obling, 2019). How do new value systems and management ideologies influence the military profession and reconfigure leadership? Do the adjectives “volatile,” “agile,” “flexible” and “collective” truly characterise the military leader, or are they moral attributes imported from an abstract “outside-of-the-profession” value system?

Fourth, the Scandinavian welfare states will continue to rely on the military profession to safeguard national territory and to support strategic values and interests. With the rise of a total defence imperative, which (as mentioned above) constructs geopolitical reality in particular ways, the balancing of domestic tasks and operations abroad will be challenged. At the same time as the armed forces are expected to participate in large-scale civil emergency and crisis planning, they continue to be expected to be prepared for humanitarian missions abroad and for complex combat contexts. Questions related to how they are to succeed under these circumstances and how they should prioritise between various needs, not least economically, call for further investigation.

Finally, none of the chapters in this edition deal explicitly with challenges and changes related to technology. Communication, surveillance and transportation technologies change perceptions of distance and space, and new weapons systems and targeting devices add new dilemmas to the core tasks of the profession. This also raises some fundamental questions concerning the current and future definition of the military profession and the roles and functions it might assume.

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1. Sweden and *Our Military Profession*: Building a Common Identity or Creating Friction?

Joakim Berndtsson

Introduction

In 2016, the Swedish Armed Forces (SAF) adopted a policy given the name *Our Military Profession* (Vår militära profession.) The document, part of the SAF Strategic Orientation of 2015, serves to outline and explain the core principles of the Swedish military profession (Swedish Armed Forces, 2016). While issues of professionalism, expertise, responsibility, values, ethics and jurisdiction in the SAF have certainly been discussed and described before, the policy represents a first effort to formulate a coherent, official narrative. The timing of its adoption is interesting; it comes in a period of political demands for increased territorial defence capabilities and a rebuilding of the Swedish “total defence” organisation, and follows a series of recent and ongoing organisational changes. The policy explains the need to define the profession by referring to new and complex conflicts, multifaceted threats and a changing role for the armed forces in Swedish society, including a need to increase trust in the SAF among the Swedish population (Swedish Armed Forces, 2016, pp. 4, 7). In this context, the policy states, “conditions for command, leadership, coherence, communication and identity formation change” and there is thus a need for a “solid foundation” for the organisation and its members, including a common understanding of “expertise, values and

responsibilities” (Swedish Armed Forces 2016, p. 7). In essence, the policy can be understood as a way for the SAF leadership to take control over the content and meaning of the military profession in times of change and uncertainty (Ledberg, 2019, p. 26).

The policy speaks to (and about) both military and civilian members of the organisation, but also to wider Swedish society and beyond. It mostly avoids the concept of identity, although the policy clearly forms part of an identity-building effort designed to shape the ways in which members of the organisation understand and identify with their roles and responsibilities. As with all such endeavours, it may serve to promote and strengthen a sense of belonging and common purpose. Yet centralised efforts to “regulate identity” are not necessarily embraced or internalised by organisation members, and policies such as *Our Military Profession* may create or increase internal opposition and disagreement (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002). The aim of this chapter is to contribute to our understanding of the ongoing construction of the Swedish military profession and to identify potential sources of contention or friction. To achieve this aim, the chapter will both analyse the Swedish military profession as defined in the policy, and address how key aspects resonate or come into conflict with professional self-images and identities among officers. Theoretically, the analysis is informed by James Burk’s definition of the military profession as comprising a specific expertise, jurisdiction and legitimacy (Burk, 2005), and by the concept of collective or shared identity as outlined by Abdelal, Herrera, Johnston and McDermott (2006). Empirically, the analysis draws on official SAF documents as well as interviews conducted with a group of Swedish officers.¹

The chapter proceeds as follows: the next section outlines the theoretical framework, centred on the concepts of the military profession and (professional) identity. From this, we move on to research design and methods. Next, a short background to the Swedish case is sketched, before proceeding to the main analysis section and, finally, to the conclusions.

1 Data collection for this study was conducted in 2016–2018 and formed part of a project on relational aspects of professional identities and professional competition between the armed forces and the private security industry. This part of the project was published open access in *Defense & Security Analysis* (Berndtsson 2019). The present paper draws on a similar theoretical framework and design, but uses mainly previously unpublished data in the analysis. The focus of the present chapter is placed not so much on relational aspects and “significant others” (i.e. Private Military and Security Contractors) but rather on vertical relations between the leadership/organisational level and military officers. See also the methods section of this chapter.

The Military Profession and Professional Identities

The concept of the military profession helps structure the analysis of how the SAF constructs its current, organisational self-image. Yet as we move down from the level of SAF leadership, it becomes clear that organisation-level conceptualisations are insufficient. As Snider (2005, p. 12) reminds us, there are at least three relevant levels of analysis: the client (society), the profession (army or military) and the individual (officer identity). This chapter is primarily concerned with the relationship between the latter two, focusing on the organisational or policy level and the level of officers, focusing on individual and shared identities. As professional self-images and identity formation processes are clearly shaped by the wider social and political context, however, the background section describes some of the wider challenges and changes currently facing the SAF. The remainder of this section outlines a framework for understanding the military profession in relation to professional identities among officers.

The question of how to define and delineate the military profession has engaged scholars since the publication of influential works by Huntington (1957), Janowitz (1960), Abrahamsson (1972) and Moskos (1977). Decades later, there is still no general agreement about how to define the profession, or whether the military should be treated as a “proper profession,” as one or several professions (for example, the army, navy, air force etc.), or as including different “types” such as the “soldier-scholar” (Downes 1985; Moskos 2000; Abbott 2002; Burk 2005; Brante, Johnsson, Olofsson & Svensson, 2015; see Brænder, this volume). Additionally, the characteristics that define a profession more generally – claims to specialised knowledge and a well-defined jurisdiction, for instance, or formal and informal rules governing membership – remain disputed, dynamic and changing (Abbott, 1988; Snider, 2005, p. 19; Bruneau, 2013, p. 16).

This chapter uses Burk’s definition of a profession as “a relatively ‘high status’ occupation whose members apply abstract knowledge to solve problems in a particular field of endeavor” (Burk, 2005, p. 41). For Burk, a profession includes three co-constitutive elements: expertise, jurisdiction and legitimacy. The first element is the mastery of abstract knowledge, produced in systems of higher education. The second refers to the control over a jurisdiction (a field of endeavour) in which this knowledge or expertise is applied. Finally, there is the match between the form of professional knowledge and the “prevailing cultural belief or bias about the legitimacy of that form to others, which is the source of professional status” (Burk, 2005, pp. 43–44). Applied to the modern military, members of the profession draw on specialised knowledge, acquired through training and (increasingly academic) education, the core of which relates to the application and

management of organised violence. Traditionally, the military's jurisdiction has been warfighting but, in many cases, it has expanded to include national defence and crisis management, international peacekeeping, disaster relief and beyond. Finally, the legitimacy of the military is rooted in the acceptance of its expertise by principals (governments), partners (other military forces or civilian organisations) and wider society (popular support). Underlying such acceptance is also the expectation that the use of military expertise is ethically and legally sound (Snider, 2005, pp. 11–12).

Burk's approach allows us to analyse changes within and differences between cases. In the manner of other countries, Canada and the United States have adopted official policies that define their national military professions; these have been set out in the publications *Duty With Honour* (Canadian Department of National Defence, 2009) and *The Army Profession* (U.S. Department of the Army, 2015). These documents both communicate norms, responsibilities and duties internally and help project a coherent image of the military profession to wider society, potentially helping to build understanding, trust and legitimacy. Although descriptions of professional membership and characteristics differ, they all relate to aspects of expertise, jurisdiction and legitimacy. Like the U.S., Sweden has embraced an inclusive idea of the military profession, encompassing both military and civilian employees (Swedish Armed Forces, 2016). While this contrasts with the Canadian policy of including uniformed personnel alone, the Swedish policy agrees with Canada's *Duty with Honour* in both style and language. Without taking these comparisons further, the Swedish policy may be understood as an expression of "isomorphism," where the SAF seek to model themselves on similar organisations and international professional standards (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). In the analysis below, the three elements set out by Burk (2005) serve as overarching themes for the analysis of the Swedish military profession at the organisational level, and as a basis for posing questions about professional identities among officers.

Before proceeding, it is useful to recall that militaries are large bureaucratic organisations, shaped not only by their expertise in the production and management of organised violence but by a need to develop and maintain administrative systems and processes internally and with external partners. In this respect, military organisations operate much like other large organisations in society today, increasingly shaped by pressures to become more efficient and to adopt business-style systems of management and organisation (Norheim-Martinsen, 2016). This "dual nature" (Snider 2005, p. 13) has led researchers to consider the consequences of different and sometimes competing organisational or institutional logics in military organisations. Administrative systems, procedures and routine

application of “non-expert work” may be seen to come into conflict with the ability to develop and maintain the core expertise of the military profession (Snider 2005, pp. 14–16; Ledberg 2019, pp. 73–76, see also Ydén, this volume). As we shall see, ideas about “bureaucratisation” are important for how Swedish officers reflect on their work.

There are many ways to approach the study of social or professional identities (see, for example, Brown, 2019; Alvesson, Ashcroft & Thomas, 2008; Abdelal et al., 2006). Here, identity is understood as multifaceted, variable, and as constructed in social contexts and in relation to others through contrasts, differences and similarities. The chapter focuses on a specific group or collective – military officers – and the characteristics that help define identification with the Swedish military profession. Professional identity is defined as a “constellation of attributes, beliefs, values, motives, and experiences in terms of which people define themselves in a professional role” (Ibarra, 1999, pp. 764–765). Drawing on previous work in organisation studies, the new Swedish policy is seen as (more or less explicitly) aiming to produce “identity work” among organisation members, engaging them in forming or strengthening a shared identification with a particular set of desirable or mandated competencies, norms and ideals (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003, p. 1165). As such, the policy is an attempt to regulate and govern identities within the organisation (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Thornborrow & Brown, 2009). While potentially strengthening coherence and feelings of belonging, a dominant, normative identity discourse may also generate “identity threats” that challenge individuals’ and groups’ preferred “identity narratives” (Brown & Coupland, 2015, p. 1318). From this perspective, understanding how the organisational image of the Swedish military profession relates to self-images or identities among officers is an important undertaking.

Essentially, the policy endeavours to construct a collective identity for specific professional groups (such as officers) and other members of the SAF. Abdelal et al. (2006) define collective or group identity as an intersubjective social category that varies along two basic dimensions: content and contestation. Content, according to the authors, “describes the *meaning* of a collective identity” while contestation “refers to the degree of *agreement* within a group over the content” (2006, p. 696, italics in original). In turn, the content (or meaning) of collective identity is made up of four overlapping and non-mutually exclusive “types”: constitutive norms, social purposes, relational comparisons and cognitive models; we thus end up with four additional themes to guide the analysis of military professional identities.

First, constitutive norms are made up of formal and informal rules that define group membership, obligations and roles; they “appear to fix meanings and set collective expectations of members of the group” (Abdelal et al., 2006, p.

697). Studying the self-images of military officers, these norms are both legal and social, and include characteristics such as personal ethic and civic duty, professional jurisdiction and ideas about commitment that bind members together and shape mutual expectations and behaviour (see also King, 2013). Secondly, social purposes refer to goals attached to the group, which also create obligations among members to engage in practices to achieve these goals. In the case of military officers, one such goal is protection of the country, which in turn is connected to issues of both jurisdiction and legitimacy. Thirdly, relational comparisons refer to the issue of defining the group in relation to what it is not. This is a key aspect and includes self-perceptions and ideas about expert knowledge and legitimate professional status among officers, especially in relation to significant “others” such as civilian employees or military contractors (Berndtsson, 2019; Dunigan, 2011). Finally, a cognitive model refers to a “worldview” or a framework that “allows members of a group to make sense of social, political, and economic conditions” (Abdelal et al., 2006, p. 699). Among officers, this includes the ways in which they understand and describe the socio-political realities of being a military professional.

The four facets of meaning of shared identities overlap and vary both across time and space and in levels of contestation. The normative and purposive aspects of collective identity, along with ideas about group membership, professional jurisdiction and expert knowledge clearly link aspects of meaning to the three overarching themes of expertise, jurisdiction and legitimacy. The framework allows us to analyse how officers articulate aspects of professional identity, how such descriptions converge or diverge in terms of shared norms and meanings, how they relate to significant others and, most importantly, to the meaning given to the profession at the level of SAF leadership. Considering the changes and challenges currently facing the SAF, it is important to understand both the organisational structure of the Swedish military profession and the potential “identity threats” that these might engender.

Materials and Methods

In terms of methods and sources, this chapter draws on a previous study on professional competition between the military and private security actors in Sweden (Berndtsson, 2019). The study collected data on several aspects of professional identity but focused chiefly on external, relational aspects of identity formation. While this chapter adopts a similar exploratory design and theoretical framework, it centres on relations and self-images within the organisation, thereby adding to our understanding of the construction of the military profession in Sweden.

As noted above, the chapter focuses on two of the levels of analysis where the content or meaning of the military profession is defined and where sources of contestation may be found: the organisational level and the level of military officers. Empirically, the chapter draws on different sources of data, including official policy documents and semi-structured interviews and text from the open-ended questions of a small-scale survey. *Our Military Profession* provides both the basis for the analysis of how the SAF officially defines the military profession in Sweden and a point of reference when studying self-perceptions among officers. Finally, previous research on military transformation and professionalisation in Sweden is used to provide a background to the analysis.

To understand professional self-images and identities among officers, the analysis uses mainly unpublished material from interviews and replies to open-ended survey questions. The previous study targeted a group of 60 experienced officers, all enrolled in the Advanced Command and Staff Programme at the Swedish Defence University.² Naturally, the views of this group are not representative of the Swedish officer corps as a whole. Yet these students, drawn from all branches of the SAF, are well advanced in their careers and can be expected to be grounded in, and reflexive about, their professional identities. Studying officers in higher education is also suitable as they can be seen as being, or becoming, “custodians” or “stewards” of the military profession in Sweden (Snider, 2017). To supplement these data, the analysis also includes discussions on the military profession in *Officerstidningen*, the periodical of the Swedish Association of Military Officers (2018b). This material provides valuable insight into the views of the largest union for officers, soldiers and sailors, representing about 13,500 members.

Data collection was mainly conducted between 2016 and 2017, that is, around the time of the publication of the new policy. The survey consisted of nine questions, three of which were open-ended and dealt with past changes and future challenges to the military profession in Sweden.³ In addition, six semi-structured interviews were conducted with students on the Staff Programme. The interviewees were self-selected (volunteers) and questions covered various aspects of being a Swedish military officer, including past and present challenges, understandings of professional knowledge and expertise, as well as issues of popular trust and

2 Out of the 60 students in this cohort, all participants were Majors (Army/Air Force) or Lt. Commanders (Navy). The largest portion (36) were made up of Army officers, while the rest were distributed equally between the Air Force and Navy. Seven of the students were women; ages spanned between 36 and 48.

3 For a more detailed description and analysis of the survey data (not used here), see Berndtsson, 2019.

support. Interviews were recorded, fully transcribed and sent to interviewees for reference and, in some cases, for comments and minor corrections.

All interview and survey sources were assigned numbers (e.g., Interview, Staff Programme Participant 1–6; Free Text Comment 1–65), and then systematically coded and analysed using a version of thematic analysis, a qualitative approach focusing on eliciting meanings from mainly (but not necessarily only) textual sources (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012). The thematic analysis in this chapter is guided by pre-defined themes to probe meanings and levels of agreement, that is, expertise, jurisdiction and legitimacy for the profession's principal characteristics, along with the four "aspects" of identity: constitutive norms, social purposes, relational comparisons and cognitive models.

Military Transformation and Professionalisation in Sweden

During the Cold War, Sweden's neutrality and later non-alignment was backed up by a comparatively large military, tasked with defending the entire territory. From the early 1990s, however, the SAF followed a wider European pattern of military downsizing, specialisation, and transnationalisation (King, 2011). The mission of the SAF was increasingly shifted towards international deployments and expeditionary capabilities, including participation in ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) in Afghanistan (2002–2014). In this period, Sweden also became an increasingly active NATO partner country (Ydén, Berndtsson, & Petersson, 2019; Petersson, 2018). Recently, and in response to what has been described as a deteriorating regional security situation, there has been a marked territorial (re)turn, with a renewed focus on national defence and increased military spending (see, for example, Swedish Defence Commission, 2017). Additionally, the Cold War concept of "total defence" has been revived, and with it an emphasis on war preparedness and, as in many other countries, on civilian-military collaboration and integration (Goldenberg et al., 2019). The territorial turn and the resumption of total defence planning creates challenges for civilian and military organisations and professionals alike, potentially leading to uncertainty or even competition around areas of expertise, responsibility and jurisdiction.

Another challenge for the SAF since the 1990s has been a relatively low level of popular support and trust, signalling a weak connection with the "client." The SAF has been described as a "well known but poorly understood" institution, where understandings in many instances are based on "traditional" and "stereotypical" images (Ledberg, 2019, p. 182). In the Strategic Orientation decision of 2015, increasing the public's knowledge about the SAF and building internal and external trust are identified as key tasks for improving credibility and legitimacy.

The policy published as *Our Military Profession*, an annex to the current strategy, forms an integral part of these efforts. In recent years, public trust in the SAF has increased. This increase coincides with the return to territorial and total defence, the reinstatement of (gender neutral) conscription, increased defence spending and considerable effort on the part of the SAF to become more visible in society (Berndtsson, Bjereld, & Ydén 2019; Strand, 2019). However, the SAF enjoys less trust than many other public institutions, and increasing knowledge and understanding of the institution remains a challenge.

Parallel with transformations on the political and strategic levels, the SAF and the officer corps have undergone several organisational changes. A three-year academic officer programme was introduced in 2008, followed by the introduction of “senior NCOs” (non-commissioned officers, or *specialistofficerare*) into the ranks of the SAF (Hedlund, 2013). In 2010, Sweden decided to abandon (temporarily, as it turned out) conscription in favour of an All-Volunteer Force (AVF).⁴ This move fundamentally transformed the ways in which the SAF “branded” itself as an employer and forced the organisation to compete in an open labour market (Strand & Berndtsson, 2015). The transformation of the Swedish military can be seen in many ways as a move towards “professionalisation,” both in terms of the contractual arrangements for soldiers and in terms of overall competence and capabilities (King 2013, pp. 211–22; see also Victor Tillberg, this volume). In addition, and mirroring New Public Management trends in many other countries, changes brought about in Sweden since the 1990s have often been aimed at streamlining the military to make it more cost-effective and to increase the level of political oversight and control (Norheim-Martinsen, 2016).

There have been several studies dealing with the military profession in Sweden, among them a large-scale study of Swedish professions, including that of the military officer, conducted by the late Thomas Brante and colleagues (2015). In their study, military officers are seen as belonging to a “semi-profession” – different from “traditional professions” (e.g. doctors) in terms of a shorter period of specialised education (expertise), and with a larger focus on practical (rather than scientific) knowledge. Further, Bolin (2008) points to several ambiguities when it comes to professional identity among officers, partly stemming from increasing bureaucratisation and a growing area of peace-time responsibilities (jurisdiction)

4 On 2 March 2017, the Swedish Government decided to partially re-instate (a gender-neutral) conscription in order to fill the ranks of the armed forces. In practice, the decision means that from January 2018, Sweden has a mixed system of recruitment based both on coercion (legal obligation) and on attracting volunteers.

for the Swedish Armed Forces and the officer corps. Finally, Ledberg (2019) examines the development of the military profession in Sweden and the relationship between the military organisation, political leadership and wider society; in her discussion of the new policy, she notes that while it can be seen as a way to define and control the content of the military profession, it may also cause disagreement within the organisation.

The Military Profession in Sweden: Self-Images and Professional Identities

The analysis is divided into two parts. The first focuses on ways in which the Swedish military profession is officially defined at the level of SAF leadership and policymaking. The second concentrates on self-images among officers. Together, the two parts provide insight into some of the prospects and challenges of building a common identity around the concept of “our military profession.”

The Organisational View: the SAF Leadership and Our Military Profession

While debates and discussions about the military profession in Sweden are not new, the recent move to establish a coherent narrative outlining the meaning of the concept indicates a renewed interest in the topic among SAF leadership. The policy working group started in 2011 and after several rounds of referrals (to internal SAF working groups, the Swedish Defence University and trade unions), the new policy was published on 1 July 2016 (Swedish Armed Forces, 2017, p. 67). The policy was subsequently printed as a booklet in 2017, with a foreword by the current Supreme Commander, General Micael Bydén.⁵ *Our Military Profession* is mainly aimed at an internal audience and serves the purpose of outlining foundational principles, helping members understand the “unique role” of the profession and their “contribution to the security and safety of all citizens” (Swedish Armed Forces 2016, p. 4–5). In addition, the policy seeks to communicate SAF expertise, jurisdiction, values and responsibilities to the client – the Swedish people and society at large (Swedish Armed Forces, 2016, p. 4). As of late 2020, the policy is also being translated into English, further widening its intended audience and clearly underlining the importance attached to it.

5 In addition to the foreword, the booklet version also has a slightly different introduction and includes some more details about the work process. References to the booklet version are dated 2017 while the references to the original policy document are dated 2016.

In the foreword to the booklet version, General Bydén describes the core of the military profession in Sweden:

The mission of the [Swedish] Armed Forces is to defend the country under all circumstances and, in the last instance, against an armed attack. This involves great responsibility and the most difficult of situations. Therefore, the core of the military profession is comprised of our collective expertise in armed combat. Equally, it is shaped by the fundamental values we are tasked to protect – freedom, democracy and equality. (Swedish Armed Forces 2017, p. 5, author’s translation)⁶

Reference to the defence of the country and to armed combat as the cornerstone of the military mission and expertise is familiar terrain. Yet it is interesting to note that the “collective” that makes up the military profession includes *all* members of the SAF: “civilian and military personnel, temporary and permanent staff, conscripts, the Home Guard [Hemvärnet] forces and volunteer organisations” (Swedish Armed Forces 2016, p. 4). Thus, the policy takes a very broad view of the military profession. Considering the recent revival of the total defence concept in Sweden and its emphasis on integration and collaboration across the civilian-military defence continuum, this inclusive view of the profession is not surprising.

The policy goes on to develop a conceptual framework based on clearly recognisable characteristics of the military profession: jurisdiction, expertise, responsibility, core values and codes of conduct (Swedish Armed Forces 2016, p. 14–24). It then goes into some detail to explain how all categories of personnel form part of the same collective, but does not specify formal requirements for membership in “our military profession.” Rather, inclusion is based on shared norms and on direct or indirect contribution to a common social purpose (defending Sweden and Swedish interests and values). The policy underscores the importance of a combination of “military” *and* “bureaucratic” competencies, emphasising military operations at sea, in the air and on land, but also areas such as IT, logistics, Human Resources (HR) and economics (Swedish Armed Forces, 2016, p. 16). In essence, the policy departs from a narrow idea of a (military) profession, presenting instead a unifying concept for all groups of personnel, civilian and military alike. The notion of “our military profession” is understood broadly as an

⁶ Unless otherwise stated, all translations are made by the author.

“area of expertise” within a certain, politically defined jurisdiction and comprising several different occupations and professions (Swedish Armed Forces 2016, pp. 7, 25). Although the policy explicitly avoids defining the concept, it is clear already from the title that this is essentially an effort to construct a collective or shared organisational identity, flowing from the concept of “our” military profession. The policy states that “the profession in itself *creates identity* and we identify to a large extent with our work. Identity is important and is based on our collective military profession” (Swedish Armed Forces 2016, p. 5, emphasis added). From this perspective, “our military profession” is a “unifying core which is the basis of all that we do” (Swedish Armed Forces 2016, p. 13).

The policy describes the role and remit of officers, senior NCOs, squad leaders, soldiers/sailors, and civilian employees. In the case of officers, this category is termed “the officer profession” and here we find a more narrowly defined view of specific expertise (management of violence), jurisdiction (military operations) and legitimacy (adhering to and embodying professional normative expectations of wider society). While the policy does not differentiate between different branches of the military, it does emphasise the importance of combining formal (theoretical/scientific) and practical knowledge, the officer’s ability to combine a military (professional) logic with public administration (bureaucratic) skills, a strong moral and ethical foundation, and collective and individual responsibility for professional development (Swedish Armed Forces, 2016, pp. 25–30, 40).

Although the policy’s definition of the officer profession is thus more restrictive, it still appears in the context of the much broader concept of “our military profession.” When officers consider their professional identity, it is not evident that they will accept the broad, all-encompassing view of “our military profession,” its seemingly porous lines of distinction or indeed the inclusion of all officers into one category. Similarly, it is unclear if civilian SAF employees will embrace their new membership in the Swedish military profession. As noted above, SAF leadership may see the policy as a way of taking control of the meaning of the military profession; this analysis indicates that they clearly conceive it as an important part of widening, building and projecting collective identity. The policy is relatively new, and it is not clear if it will create a “solid foundation” and a “developed view of the profession” shared by SAF members (Swedish Armed Forces, 2016, p. 4). However, by studying officers’ ideas about their profession we can gain an understanding of both the range of different meanings given to, and levels of agreement about, key aspects of the policy.

Views from Within: Self-Images and Professional Identities among Swedish Officers

In early 2018, the Swedish Association of Military Officers (Officersförbundet) launched a series of articles in its periodical *Officerstidningen* discussing different aspects of the military profession and the new SAF policy. As Ledberg (2019, p. 25) observes, it is noteworthy that the largest union for military officers in Sweden initiated this series by distancing themselves from the term military profession:

The ways in which we relate to the concept of the profession in military contexts is fundamental to our services, our work and us as individuals. The [Swedish] Armed Forces have chosen to call this the military profession and we, the [Swedish] Association of Military Officers have chosen to call it the officer profession. (Swedish Association of Military Officers 2018a, p. 14)

The statement emphasises the importance of the profession but clearly adopts a narrower view of the term, instead opting for the concept of “officer profession.” However, the text also underscores that this is done “without in any way intending to compete with the Armed Forces about terminology” (Swedish Association of Military Officers 2018a, p. 14). As Ledberg (2019, p. 26) notes, the Association’s positioning vis-à-vis the policy indicates that the concept of a profession may be interpreted differently and used to serve the interests and needs of different groups. When it comes to substantive issues of expertise, jurisdiction, legitimacy and core values, the Association’s views largely mirror those expressed in the policy (Swedish Association of Military Officers 2018a, p. 14; Swedish Association of Military Officers 2018b, pp. 16–19). Yet by focusing more or less exclusively on the *officer* profession, the Association not only signals a different take on basic constitutive norms surrounding membership, but also effectively avoids potentially thorny relational issues such as civilian-military lines of distinction.

As we move to the officers in the Advanced Command and Staff Programme, issues of content and contestation become more complex. To start off, among the Staff Programme group, the survey shows that about half of the participants agree that military officers are a profession like the medical or legal profession. At the same time, a large majority of the group see the profession as shaped by a strong *esprit de corps* based on both practical and scientific knowledge and as rooted in common ethical values (Berndtsson, 2019, p. 11). Thus, there is agreement about group cohesion and common values (or constitutive norms) and about the dual (practical/scientific) nature of specialised knowledge, which in turn forms

the basis for claims to expertise. There is less agreement, however, when it comes to seeing officership as a profession, which in turn suggests an absence of a strong internal discourse or shared cognitive model.

Asked to describe the major changes to their work over the past five years, two officers stated that “the profession has moved more towards being a civil servant” and that it “has been watered down and become more like any other occupation” (Free Text Comment 31, 32). By contrast, another officer noted that although for some time, being an officer was more like any other job, it “is now beginning to return to a profession that you *are*. I *am* an officer; I don’t just work as one” (Free Text Comment 30, emphasis added). A similar sentiment is expressed by one of the interviewees: “I don’t want to say that this is an *occupation* for me, but a *profession*” (Interview, Staff Programme Participant 5, emphasis added). Yet another interviewee observes: “We should not forget that in many ways, the officer profession is far from a calling for everyone, but it is a job that one enjoys” (Interview, Staff Programme Participant 3). As we can see from these statements, there is some dispute among officers in the group when it comes to understanding the shared identity *as a profession* (a cognitive model). This in itself is not surprising; collective identities are never fixed or stable but always vary in levels of agreement over meanings (Abdelal et al., 2006, p. 700). At the same time, too much disagreement may also indicate a lack of cohesion and conflicting views on normative and purposive elements of the shared identity. From this perspective, the identity-building ambition of the policy can be seen as one way of trying to widen and clarify the meaning of the military profession in Sweden and to increase the degree of agreement around the concept among members.

Several of the officers agree with a need for clarification of what the profession *is*, both internally and in relation to other groups. As one officer notes: “I believe in a clearer ... communication of what the Armed Forces and the military profession are, once we have put our foot down and determined what that entails” (Interview, Staff Programme Participant 5). Developing a similar argument, another officer observes:

I think the status of the profession must increase. [This can be achieved] if we can make [the meaning of] our profession clearer, if we can make the purpose of serving the profession clearer. The idea of a profession may appear a worn-out concept, at least to me, in the academic setting. But if we can make its meaning clearer ... and create more concrete purposes and goals around why we do what we do, and what we are really good at, create pride in what we do, then that is a very good start. (Interview, Staff Programme Participant 4)

Here, the purpose of clarifying content or meaning is linked to both the status of the profession and individual pride. As such, this observation appears to be in line with the stated aims of the policy. However, and as shown above, officers also take issue with the ways in which the policy frames the concept of the/our military profession. The following quote develops this argument:

I know that we discussed the *officer* profession some time ago, but now the discussion is more about the *military* profession. I have read it [the policy] and I ... strongly disagree in some regards. I think that it contains a rather diluted definition, and ... they use the concept of the profession to create some sort of identity, as I see it. And I think they got it wrong, so to speak. One thing is that it is used as a sort of identity marker, and then this idea that all personnel in the armed forces are included ... [T]hat means that the core of the profession is diluted to fit everyone. (Interview, Staff Programme Participant 6, emphasis added)

Again, the issue here is the use of a broad, inclusive (or “diluted”) concept of the military profession to create a common, collective identity. Continuing, it becomes clear that, for this officer, the key question is about group membership in relation to core expertise:

Because [the policy] does not differentiate between different groups and members of the profession, it is very strange if our HR administrators who, according to our own ... the definition, are also part of armed combat. I agree that they make it possible ... but they are not part of it as such. ... I wish we would define it more narrowly. (Interview, Staff Programme Participant 6)

From these observations, we can see that ideas about expertise as well as relational aspects of identity – expressed here as a lack of differentiation between officers and civilian personnel – may play a central role in shaping officers’ willingness to accept the idea of “our military profession.” The widened definition of the military profession may be perceived as an “identity threat,” challenging officers’ perceptions of unique expertise, jurisdiction and status.

Across nearly all interviews and open-ended survey questions, themes of “armed combat” and “management of violence” are central in officers’ descriptions of their core expertise and links to both normative, purposive and relational aspects of their professional self-images. For instance, officers in this group gen-

erally see the return to territorial defence as welcome and as positive for building a common social purpose understood both within the Swedish Armed Forces and among the public. At the same time, themes linked to core expertise also figure prominently in descriptions of current and future problems and challenges. Here, references to “too much bureaucratisation” or “administration” and “too little focus on training/preparing for war/warfighting” are frequently linked to a decreasing sense of purpose and meaningfulness.

In addition, many officers in this group touch on the issue of “academisation,” that is, the increased focus on academic competencies among officers. This development is described in positive terms as a form of professionalisation, but also in negative terms as sometimes resulting in too much focus on “theoretical knowledge” in officer education at the expense of practical (warfighting) skills. Discussing these issues in relation to future challenges for the SAF, some officers express a need for the organisation to find a new or improved “balance” between academic/theoretical and practical knowledge (Free Text Comment 52, 53). Finally, a few officers also associate the decreasing focus on war/fighting with an increasing and, in their view, negative focus on “gender,” “gender research” and “1325 work” (Free Text Comment 16, 43). Such images, although not prominent in the data on this group, are clearly linked to gendered understandings of military ideals, expertise and occupational boundaries (e.g. Persson 2010; also Sløk-Andersen & Persson, this volume).

To sum up, professional self-images among Swedish officers are varied and multifaceted. There are signs of agreement around the meaning of basic normative and purposive aspects, but also several signs of contestation and disagreement, especially, perhaps, around relational aspects and the widening of the profession.

Conclusions

This chapter aims to contribute to our understanding of how the Swedish military profession is defined at different levels of the organisation and to identify key challenges and sources of contestation. Questions about the military profession and professional identity are important in Sweden at present, especially in the face of ongoing changes that include the rebuilding of total defence structures and attendant demands for cooperation and coordination across civilian-military organisational and professional boundaries. In turn, such developments reshape the role of the SAF in society, raising new questions about, and potential competition for, military expertise, jurisdiction and legitimacy – all of which are at the heart of conceptualisations of the military profession.

The analysis has focused mainly on two levels: SAF leadership or policy level, and the level of military officers. As we have seen, there are clear signs of agreement around certain aspects of collective norms and characteristics, especially around identification with issues of core expertise, social purposes and normative foundations of the profession. It also seems that the policy's ambition of clarifying the meaning of the military profession internally is in line with what many officers see as a necessary step in the development of the SAF. Further, the policy serves the purpose of clarifying and communicating the role, mission, expertise and ethical values of the Armed Forces to the wider public, political leaders and other organisations. The fact that the policy is being translated into English is further testament to the importance attached to it by the leadership of the SAF.

The SAF's effort to regulate and govern identity through a central narrative appears, however, to have generated resistance and friction, too. The Association of Swedish Officers clearly rejects the constitutive norms around membership of "our military profession," a reluctance equally evident among Staff Programme officers. Even though the policy clearly makes a distinction between "our military profession" and the "officer profession," this move to create a collective identity is seen as distorting officers' professional self-images founded on ideas about – and relational boundaries around – unique expertise, jurisdiction and sources of status and legitimacy. The concept of "our military profession" does not yet offer a strong and shared cognitive model or discourse around which members can build their professional self-image. In fact, some officers do not even see officership as a profession at all, but, rather, as "any other job." It is likely that this will continue to be the case – but for these individuals, the road to accepting and internalising the idea of "our military profession" is arguably longer.

The analysis indicates additional points of disagreement around, for instance, the realities of combining and balancing military expertise (armed combat, leadership and management of violence) with the role as administrator or "bureaucrat." There are also differing ideas about the foundations of specialised knowledge/expertise, where some officers are critical of the "academisation" of officer education. While this does not mean that these officers reject academic education altogether, such sentiments do suggest a perceived imbalance between theoretical and practical or experience-based knowledge. Certainly, we should be careful when drawing conclusions from a small population or specific collective; more research is clearly needed to understand both questions of identity formation on a larger scale and for further assessments about key challenges and the long-term, identity-building potential of *Our Military Profession*. Still, this analysis has pointed to potential sources of friction and questions around meaning that merit further attention.

Future research should aim for multi-level analyses based on larger samples, and on specific sub-populations and groups. It would be interesting to study how the idea of “our military profession” resonates with members of different branches of the military (i.e., the army, navy and air force), as well as with civilian SAF personnel, senior NCOs, reservists and members of the Home Guard. Comparisons between groups might tell us more about professional identity formation and friction in and between different parts of the organisation. In addition, it would be useful to investigate how the content of the policy relates to the individual self-images of senior SAF officers – that is, the “custodians” of the military profession in Sweden. Analyses should also probe additional sources and sites of identification in educational, political and social contexts. Finally, international comparisons of policies and doctrines could shed additional light on the nature and characteristics of the military profession in different social and cultural settings, tracing the influence of certain ideas, perspectives and modes of organisation.

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2. Letting the Right Ones in. Gendered Boundary Work in the Military Profession

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Introduction

The inclusion of women into military ranks, combat units and special operation forces has proven controversial for decades. Should women be allowed to train as conscripts, to carry weapons in wartime, or to command military units? And if so, would they automatically be considered members of the military profession? In this chapter, we explore arguments about the inclusion of women in military work, unfolding how the military profession and its boundaries are, and have been, negotiated, protected and challenged in relation to gender.

The example of women in the Swedish Air Force provided by Sundevall (2011) is illustrative. During the Second World War, women were recruited to serve in Swedish observation towers looking out for enemy planes. The decision to allow women to serve in these positions was much debated. It had proven particularly difficult to find agreement on whether the women should be armed or not, and whether or not their work should be labelled “combat”. The solution was a pragmatic compromise: the women were designated civilian employees, and while they were armed, it was made clear that this was only for the purpose of self-defence. With the potential use of violence by women on behalf of

the Swedish Air Force clearly distinguished from violence that would usually be labelled combat, women were permitted to make a needed contribution to national defence without any threat to the exclusively male nature of the military profession.

In this chapter, we unfold the ways in which gender is entangled in the negotiation of professional boundaries in the context of the military. Our discussion of the extent to which gender can be understood as a performative force derived from the entanglement of gender norms and professional norms draws on a tradition of gender studies according to which the categories of *women* and *men* are not as natural and stable as they might appear to be at first glance (West & Zimmerman, 1987; Acker, 1990; Butler, 1990). Gender as a theoretical concept allows for an analysis of how the categories of men and women, like those of *femininity* and *masculinity*, are “done” – that is, how gender comes into being through social interaction and is reproduced in societal structures (West & Zimmerman, 1987). This is a shift away from the assumption that one’s biological sex implies a specific gender expression, personality, ability or desire; that one’s sex characterises the entire person, defining who we are.

Ledberg (2019) argues that a similar shift in analytical focus has taken place in the study of professions in recent decades. In what we might call classical studies of professions and professionalisation, scholars have tried to pin down what professions are – their characteristics and origins. Such a taxonomic approach, focusing on what distinguishes proper professions from “mere” occupations (or variations like semi-professions, hybrid professions and non-professions) has become a key issue in relevant research (Klegon, 1978). Scholars studying professions have, however, become increasingly critical of this focus on classifying what a profession *is*, arguing instead for a focus on what the label “profession” *does* (Klegon, 1978; Witz, 1990; Gieryn, 1999). This includes, not least, analysis of how the category itself produces (or fails to produce) status, privilege and autonomy for its members (Ledberg, 2019). This chapter neither makes the case for the military being a profession, nor does it try to define exactly who or what may be part of it; rather, we employ a conceptualisation of profession affording an understanding of how processes of inclusion and exclusion work to uphold the boundaries of the military profession – what is inside and what is outside.

When this perspective is applied to the study of professions and professionalisation, we argue, gender needs to be taken into account in order to understand what professions do and how they develop in relation to other occupational groups – simply because gender categories and norms are deeply intertwined with the negotiation and policing of the boundaries of professions (Witz, 1990; Davies, 1995; Kerfoot, 2002; Persson, 2011). This chapter therefore draws on the

premise that a gender perspective is crucial when trying to understand current re-definitions of the military profession. When women are included into a previously all-male profession, unspoken professional norms governing inclusion, legitimacy and recognition are challenged, defended and made visible. We use this visibility analytically to unpack negotiations of the boundaries circumscribing the military profession, and further, use the concept of *boundary work* to bring together theories of gender and professions. This is done in the context of three issues regarded as essential to the military profession. Specifically, the chapter unfolds how *combat*, *bodily abilities* and *cohesion* have acquired the status of sites for the re-negotiation of gendered professional demarcations.

Throughout the chapter, we draw upon both empirical examples from studies we have conducted in the Danish and Swedish armed forces and insights from existing research on gender and professions in military organisations. Our own studies were conducted using ethnographic methods. In the Danish case, the study focused on what it means to be a good soldier in the 21st century and how newcomers to the profession work to be recognised as such (Sløk-Andersen, 2018a). This was explored empirically through 36 qualitative interviews with recruits and commanders, a week of observations at a recruitment centre, and four months of participation where Sløk-Andersen joined a platoon of conscripts through their basic training. On this foundation, the study included analyses of the effect and meaning of things such as uniforms (Sløk-Andersen, 2018b) and sexualised humour (Sløk-Andersen, 2019; Lilleaas, Ellingsen & Sløk-Andersen, 2020) in establishing what it means to be a good soldier while simultaneously making it more difficult for some recruits to become one. In the Swedish case (Persson, 2011), the study focused primarily on how gender relations and professional relations in the Swedish armed forces were transformed through the increased focus on international missions. The study comprised three separate sets of data collection: an interview study with eight women officers who entered the armed forces in the 1980s (Pettersson, Persson & Berggren, 2008), an interview study with nine employees in strategic roles at the armed forces headquarters (Persson, 2010a), and a five-week ethnographic study following the training of a military unit preparing for an international mission (Persson, 2010b, 2012, 2013).

It is worth noting that the conceptualisation of the military profession as such is still somewhat new and contested. Instigated to a great extent by Huntington's *The Soldier and the State* (2002), military work has been conceptualised within a frame of profession, and professionalism, debated and adjusted following continuing institutional and physical changes in the armed forces (Harries-Jenkins, 1990; Segal & De Angelis, 2009; Hachey, Libel & Dean, 2020; see also Brænder, this volume). A significant question underlying these academic debates is that

of who might be considered a member of the military profession. Should it be anyone employed in a military position? Officers? Combatants? Conscripted soldiers? What of veterans and mercenaries? Arriving at a definition is analytically challenging; constantly subject to renegotiation, it appears to require a different form according to perspective and geographical location. We employ an inclusive approach in this chapter rather than expending effort on defining who legitimately fits the category: despite the risk of obscuring both some of the (contested) boundaries that might exist between groups, and distinctions in terminology and organisational structures between the countries of Sweden and Denmark, we have chosen to use the concept of the *soldier* throughout the chapter to represent military professionals at large.

The Construction of Professions

Drawing on sociological conceptualisations of professions (Klegon, 1978; Abbott, 1988; Macdonald, 1995) it is difficult to point to exactly where a profession begins and ends. Rather than focusing on establishing a clear and uncontested demarcation between members and non-members of a profession, scholars suggest that professions are established through continuous processes of professionalisation that work to establish an inside and an outside (Abbott, 1988; Witz, 1990). Throughout this chapter, we conceive these processes to be *boundary work*, an elaboration of the argument made by MacLeish (2015) that, rather than an actual, tangible separation, the divide between a military and civilian sphere is the product of a “constant policing, performing, and imagining of the boundaries between in and out” (p. 17). Through boundary work, difference is constructed between those who are considered proper and legitimate members of the profession and those who are not – a fluid divide between an inside and an outside, core and periphery, that produces or hinders access to positions, resources and status in organisations (Persson, 2011; Sløk-Andersen, 2018a).

Scholars in the field of gender and profession have argued that the profession is inherently gendered (Hearn, 1982; Witz, 1990; Davies, 1996; Allen, 2000; 2001; Cheney & Ashcraft, 2007; Dahle, 2012). As a significant consequence, occupations dominated by men are more likely to be recognised as professions. Historically, “the professional label has been reserved for occupations that historically take place outside of the home” (Butler, Chillas & Muhr, 2012, p. 262) – that is, work historically carried out by men. The inherently gendered nature of the profession was first argued by the sociologist Witz (1990, 1992). Understanding the profession to be exclusory in nature, Witz turned to the field of 19th century medicine in the United Kingdom to illustrate the vital role played by gender in

the process of exclusion and demarcation that defines it. As women most often end up on the outside, Witz argued (1990, 1992), their access to the resources and possibilities generated within the profession is equally limited. This is seen as a consequence of gender and professional norms entangling in ways that determine, for example, who is deemed fit for which type of work (Witz, 1992; Persson & Wieslander, 2021). Consequently, stereotypical expectations of women's particular strengths influence the policing of professional boundaries to make them apparently "ineligible" (Witz 1990, p. 680). The same is true, it should be said, for men in minority positions in other gendered professional contexts (Sargent, 2000; Eriksson, 2002; Hedlin, Åberg & Johansson, 2019). Thus, we align ourselves with Dahle (2012, p. 310) in arguing that "gendering professional theories will produce new and richer understandings of the professions and allow us to comment on how the premises for becoming successful within the system of professions differ according to gender."

Access to professions, then, remains limited. As Muhr and Sløk-Andersen (2017, p. 367) have noted, "due to their historical meaning, [professions] tend to have developed subtle cultural codes for the way individuals are seen as suitable (or non-suitable) for the work performed" (see also Butler, Chillas & Muhr, 2012; Sullivan, 2012; Ashcraft, 2013). Given the extent to which the question of "suitability" has informed discussion on the subject, this is crucial for understanding debates concerning women's access to military training and employment, and consequently the military profession. Do women have sufficient psychological strength? Do they have sufficient physical strength? Sufficient courage? Inverting this debate, scholars such as Svendsen (2018) have suggested that, rather than women being a threat to the military profession or to military professionalism, military organisations might actually use women to lever furthering modernisation and professionalisation. The military profession has found itself in need of transformation and new competencies not because of women's admittance but because of the ways in which wars are waged (Mellström, 2012; Svendsen, 2018).

The divide between a professional inside and an unprofessional outside is important, as professionals enjoy both status, advantages and perks. As Dahle notes of being associated with a profession: "Those who succeed in promoting their self-interests obtain benefits and privileges on behalf of their group. They achieve sovereignty and jurisdiction over their knowledge, i.e., autonomy" (2012, p. 311). Such autonomy is connected to "an occupational monopoly over the provision of certain skills and competencies" (Witz, 1990, p. 675), and in effect, the ability to claim the paid work of a specific profession. Professions can therefore be said to be a matter of acquiring monopoly and authority. Consequently, they are characterised by struggles over influence and the right to define standards and

“truths” within the profession – processes we would label as boundary work. On top of these more abstract privileges, professionalism also more concretely comes with prestige, comparatively high salaries and worker autonomy (Sullivan 2012, p. 276, after Roberts, 2005), all of which makes professional status attractive for both individuals and organisations. While soldiers may not enjoy all such benefits – they are, for instance, rarely paid very well – they might enjoy more prestige than many others doing “dirty work” (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999).

On account of these benefits, or to ensure them, access to a profession is limited, thereby monopolising rewards and claiming professional truths for insiders only (Butler, Chillias & Muhr, 2012; Stengers, 2018). It can be argued that this was the case for the military profession, from which women were legally excluded, until the very end of the 20th century (Sundevall, 2011; Sløk-Andersen, 2014). A part of the process of restricting access is the demarcation of different professions, aiding the protection and expansion of a specific profession’s “turf.” In the case of the military profession, the specific tasks carried out by many soldiers will in themselves often be similar to those of police officers, private security guards, medical personnel or engineers. To a large degree, similar tasks and skills are translated into separate professions through the action of constant boundary work, variously establishing and defending demarcations within and around the military profession and neighbouring professions, creating difference between one and the other.

The concept of boundary work was first introduced by Gieryn (1999) in the sociology of science, used to analyse scientists’ search for epistemic authority. Allen (2000, 2001) developed the theory further in her analysis of the ways in which healthcare workers accomplish formal boundaries and negotiate the concrete division of labour in a district general hospital. Allen conceives of professional jurisdiction as a practical accomplishment and describes boundary work as “micropolitical strategies through which work identities and occupational margins are negotiated” (Allen 2000, p. 348). Exactly who gets to be part of any profession is the outcome of both formal strategies such as admissions requirements, training and licences and less transparent or conscious strategies such as discrimination (Sullivan, 2012). These processes of inclusion and exclusion mean that some people struggle more than others to be viewed as eligible or legitimate members of a profession (Acker, 1990; Sullivan, 2012; Sløk-Andersen, 2018a).

Based on studies of different marginalised occupations, Butler, Chillias and Muhr (2012) add to this argument by emphasising that it is productive to pay attention to such processes of boundary work as they unfold both within and between professions. Specifically, they urge us to examine why some professions gain high levels of social recognition (airline pilots, for example) while others fail

to gain professional legitimacy (cabin personnel, for example), that is, marginalisation *between* professions. Second, they also urge us to pay attention to marginalisation from *within* professions –how processes of inclusion and exclusion work to award and withhold professional status amongst different groups. According to Butler, Chillias and Muhr (2012), however, margins can be said to be everywhere in a profession, meaning that no profession has a stable centre “safe” from negotiation or potential destabilisation. Consider the appearance of the key figure of the “warrior soldier” in the Danish military at the beginning of the 21st century (Pedersen, 2017; see also Pedersen, this volume) – a change that must have been difficult to foresee a few decades earlier “given the country’s post-war reputation as a society characterised by tolerant, humanitarian, and pacifist stances” (Daugbjerg & Sørensen, 2017, p. 1–2).

In the following sections, we will closely consider the ways in which boundary work occurs in and around the military profession. Condensing the issue of military boundary work, we will illuminate the ways in which gender has been discussed in the context of three themes central to military work: combat, bodily abilities and cohesion. These are themes that have appeared essential in both the field of gender in the military and in our respective studies of the Danish and Swedish armed forces (Persson, 2011, 2013; Sløk-Andersen, 2014, 2018a).

Combat as the core of the military profession

The presence, role, and legitimacy of women in military work continues to be debated in the Nordic countries, even after their admittance to the military profession. The Swedish parliament made the decision to give women access to military positions in 1978, outlining a gradual process that began with allowing women into ground positions in the Air Force in 1980. In 1989, the process was completed when submarine and aviation service positions were opened (Persson & Sundevall, 2019). In Denmark, low-ranked military positions were opened up to women in 1971 and officer training in 1974; the formal process of inclusion was completed when women were permitted to become fighter pilots in 1992. The question of whether women should be allowed to participate in combat was at the heart of debates and negotiations concerning inclusion (Sundevall, 2011; Sløk-Andersen, 2014; Persson & Sundevall, 2019).

Combat is often presented as the very core of the military profession, considered “the basic unit of warfare” (Millar & Tidy, 2017). And it is the part of the military profession with the strongest and most enduring connection to men and masculinity (Enloe, 2013; Basham, 2013; MacKenzie, 2015). If we widen the scope of women in the military to beyond women’s inclusion in the profes-

sion, however, the timeline becomes altogether different to that outlined above. Research in the field of gender and the military shows that, although they have not been allowed to perform tasks that have been considered professional military work, women have indeed been present in everyday military work for a very long time (Mitchell, 1966; Hacker, 1981; Sjöberg, 2008). Women have, for example, been present as accompanying wives and daughters, as cooks, prostitutes, and nurses. The example of the women serving in the Air Force during the Second World War described in the introduction to this chapter is also illustrative, including the key features of the ongoing debate concerning women's place in the military. Should women be allowed to work in the armed forces, and if so, what positions and tasks would be available to them? At the heart of this discussion lie professional demarcations closely connected to both gendered divisions of labour and professional norms governing who can be considered a full member of the military profession; this explains why women, armed, uniformed and manning air defence towers in wartime, were still not considered soldiers – and, perhaps more importantly, why the violence they would have used was pre-emptively labelled “self-defence” rather than combat.

Interest in the concept of combat has been growing in recent years in both the field of critical military studies and amongst feminist scholars (Enloe, 2013; Daggett, 2015; MacKenzie, 2015). In their article “Combat as a Moving Target,” Millar and Tidy (2017) argue that while feminist scholars have convincingly showed that combat is central to the production and reproduction of masculine norms and myths of soldier heroism, few have really unpacked the empirical category of combat itself. If studies fail to problematise common sense definitions of combat as an empirical reality, they argue, the analysis of gender, war and the military remains under-theorised. Sweden offers an interesting illustration of combat as a somewhat slippery concept, especially during the 1970s when the issue of women in the military was intensely debated (Persson & Sundevall, 2019). A state committee appointed in 1975 was assigned the task of outlining the details of women's upcoming inclusion into the military profession. With the issue of women in combat proving particularly controversial, the committee was instructed to identify the non-combat positions where women should be allowed to serve. While the instruction was well aligned with principles in other military organisations (few, if any, countries allowed women to serve in so-called combat positions at the time), it soon became apparent that there was no simple distinction to be made between combat and non-combat positions as there was no policy outlining a clear division between the two. When the committee's instructions were revised in 1978, their assignment was no longer limited to non-combat positions. The issue of women in combat lingered throughout the process of the elimination of

restrictions on their entering the military profession as the Supreme Commander at the time remained opposed to opening the final positions until the reform had been implemented (Sundevall, 2011).

In the decades following the full inclusion of women into the military profession in Sweden and Denmark in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the issue of women in combat appeared on the political agenda of many other countries; the difficulty of defining the so-called combat positions continued to cause problems. When American and British troops fought in Iraq and Afghanistan, women were formally banned from serving in combat units. When soldiers returned home, however, many women had been in combat. Some had even been awarded distinctions (King, 2015). In 2013, the US Secretary of Defense announced that all combat roles would be opened for women in 2016; in 2018 the UK followed suit, thereby formally removing the ban on women serving in combat from all NATO forces (King, 2015; UK Ministry of Defence, 2016) and bringing women closer to the core of the military profession on an international level.

Over the last 50 years, much work has been invested in defining combat and debating whether women should be allowed to participate. We find it relevant to ask not what combat is, but what combat *does* as a means for establishing and defending lines of demarcation between men and women in the military profession. Positioned as the core of the profession, combat and combat experience not only support membership of the military profession; they link to vertical career opportunities. Our studies disclosed analytical patterns in the experience of our interviewees illustrating that, while it may not be a formalised criterion, combat experience is crucial for advancement to high-ranked positions in the armed forces. Perhaps that is precisely why it has been such an important theme in the debates concerning women's inclusion into the ranks.

Embodying the military profession

Amongst military scholars, soldiers' bodies have been argued to be paramount to military work, or even constitutive of the entire profession (Richman-Loo & Weber, 1996; Carreiras, 2006; Lande, 2007; Carreiras & Kümmel, 2008; McSorley, 2015). Ascribing such importance to the body of the soldier, its capabilities, endurance and strength becomes pivotal for professional success – or even for simple admittance, as injuries and illnesses might lead to one being deemed unfit to serve at all. Considering this through the lens of boundary work, the body becomes a site for the policing of professional boundaries, as perceptions of strength and ability become mechanisms for inclusion and exclusion. After interviewing soldiers, observing units and scrutinising admissions requirements

in our previous studies (Persson, 2011, 2013; Sløk-Andersen, 2014, 2018a), we understand bodily abilities as closely intertwined with professional standards and considered of great value and importance in military work. During a week of observations at a recruitment centre, Sløk-Andersen, for instance, noticed how membership of the Danish armed forces was described as entailing work “of a quite physical character.” The instructor who made this statement in a room filled with young Danes called for the draft examination then encouraged them to start working out a couple of months or even a year before they were to muster.

In many countries, conscription has added a gendered layer to the importance of the body, as compulsory military service for male citizens has established close ties between the military profession and the male body (Carreiras, 2006; Eriksson, 2014). Such connections between the male body and the military profession have recently been challenged with the introduction of gender-neutral conscription in both Sweden and Norway, thus tampering with the gendered foundation of the entire military profession. Equally, the United Nations’ *Resolution on Women, Peace and Security* 1325 (UN Security Council, 2000) has challenged such gendered patterns through its insistence that women must be included in both the prevention and resolution of conflicts – that is, included in military work. In light of this resolution from 2000, the assumption that only men are to be part of the military – as indicated and established by so many conscription systems – was put into question. Both the UN resolution and gender-neutral conscription systems thus destabilise assumptions that men are the obvious members of the military profession on simple anatomical grounds.

Few military organisations seem fully geared to deal with the female body, however. While uniforms have been adapted, boots have been made available in smaller sizes and sports bras have been made available in the Swedish and Danish armed forces (all examples of equipment called for by some of the first women who served), there are still clear remnants of a male-only profession (Schröder, 2017; Sløk-Andersen, 2018a). One example from a Danish context is the lack of protocols and procedures relating to how pregnant soldiers and soldiers returning to work after giving birth should deal with bodily changes in a physically demanding job (Svop, 2019). While this cannot be considered a conscious attempt to exclude women from the military profession, it is an example of the ways in which standards and procedures in the military continue to be modelled from a male standard (Richman-Loo & Weber, 1996; Cohn, 2000; MacKenzie, 2015).

The fear of damage to reproductive organs has been used as an argument against women’s (full) inclusion in those debates where female anatomy was a feature. When combat positions were opened to women in Denmark, for example, the role of fighter pilot was excepted because it was not known “how the very

fast acceleration in this type of airplane affects women's [reproductive] physicality' (Ligestillingsrådet, 1989, p. 39). While such hesitations were soon refuted, arguments about women's reproductive abilities as an obstacle to military work still arise sporadically (see, for example, Maninger, 2008). In Sweden, there were similar concerns when positions were beginning to open up for women (Persson & Sundevall, 2019). Here, concerns were about everything from women's physical strength and capacity for oxygen absorption to how menstruation, pregnancy and breastfeeding were to be handled in the military, as well as concerns about the risk of birth defects for women serving in tactical aviation or the submarine service while pregnant.

Based on these examples, it can be argued that women's bodies have been "taken hostage" in efforts to uphold boundaries around the military profession. In a review of studies examining the connection between human bodies and the gendering of professions, Sullivan (2012, p. 275) has noted that

professions – and who is considered a professional – rest in large part on the gendered perceptions of both the occupation (for example, airline pilots) and the embodied subjectivities of who is doing the work (white, male, middle class, able-bodied) (Ashcraft and Mumby, 2004). ... [O]ur modern definitions of what constitutes a professional are pervasively narrow and gendered, and linked to the bodies doing the work.

This appears to hold true in a profession like the military where so much attention is given to the physical abilities of its members and those seeking to join. Draft examinations, admission tests and yearly appraisals of employees' fitness make up the more formalised indications of how membership of the military profession is dependent on a strong and able body. More implicit indications of this we find in daily routines of doing push-ups or running the 10km track, and the crucial role played by physical accomplishments in soldiers' assessment of each other's capabilities and professionalism (McSorley, 2016; Pedersen, 2017; Sløk-Andersen, 2018a).

The body is held to be central to the military profession in the everyday work of soldiers, in policies and procedures and in political debates about gender. It thus constitutes a central site for constructing and defending professional demarcations through boundary work. Doubts of the suitability of women as members of the military profession based on their perceived physical limitations recur as a form of boundary work. In an interview study with some of the first women to become military officers in Sweden, women repeatedly proved themselves and

defended their place in the profession on the 10km running track (Pettersson, Persson & Berggren, 2008, p. 203). An officer described an incident that took place when she was in training to become a captain. In class, one of her peers stated “Blir man slagen av en tjej fysiskt eller i teoretiska prov så är man kass som kille” – if you are beaten by a girl in a physical or theoretical test as a guy, you stink. When the class ran the 10km track a week later, and she reached the finish line 10 minutes before him, she found him and told him “Damn, you stink!” The officer tells the story as an example of how she has managed to gain acceptance as a woman officer, proving her worth on the prestigious arena of physical capacity. She also tells it as a sort of success story, since this particular colleague approached her at their graduation to say “I accept *you* as a woman officer.” But, she also notes, this was to be considered an individual exception and that his conviction that women should be considered inferior remained. That way, although he agreed to accept her as a “woman officer” based on her achievements on the 10 km track, he had not changed his mind that women in general did not belong in the profession.

Little discussion is required to find agreement that, on average, there exist physical differences between men and women; this is hardly what any scholar discussing increased gender integration in military forces would suggest. Of greater interest is the complex question of how the difference between these averages is mobilised as boundary work, and how claims about different bodies are used to establish and defend boundaries of gender and profession. As MacKenzie (2015, p. 98) has noted, “physical arguments are not as objective and straightforward as they appear.” Attending only to averages rather than individual performances is one example of how arguments about bodies become gendered; for the military scholars Carreiras and Kümmel (2008, p. 30), indeed, it demonstrates how ideas about the strong body have become the main “discursive weapons targeting gender integration in the military.” So while there may be a push for a greater inclusion of women and a redefinition of military work and culture due to technological and political developments such as UN Resolution 1325, the gendered body is invoked as an argument against change in the military profession and its intake of new insiders (MacKenzie, 2015; Persson & Sundevall, 2019; Sløk-Andersen, 2018a; Stern & Strand, in press).

Cohesion as the key to efficiency

In the field of military studies, cohesion has long been considered an essential condition for military efficiency (van Creveld, 2001; Simons, 2000; King, 2013, 2015). King (2015) describes cohesion as a concept closely linked to combat and

shows how this conceptual duo has been developed theoretically since it was first outlined in a 1948 article analysing the work of German soldiers in the Second World War (Shils & Janowitz, 1948). In Shils and Janowitz's conceptualisation, cohesion refers to bonds between soldiers created by "spatial proximity, the capacity for intimate communications, the provision of paternal protectiveness by NCOs and junior officers, and the gratification of certain personality needs, for example, manliness, by the military organisation and its activities" (Shils & Janowitz, 1948, p. 315). This theoretical concept has become widely recognised since it was coined. Despite military organisations and work having undergone much change since WWII, this issue of closeness, trust and intimacy between soldiers is equally present in contemporary accounts of military work. For many of the soldiers we have interviewed, for instance, building close bonds with other soldiers is a crucial part of their motivation for doing military work – and for doing it well (Persson, 2011; 2012; Sløk-Andersen, 2019; Guschke & Sløk-Andersen, 2021). This closeness between soldiers is reflected in expressions such as *band of brothers* and *brothers-in-arms*; expressions that, due to their historic origin, presuppose a male-only unit. It is perhaps unsurprising that cohesion has therefore been another central concern in debates around women's entry to the military profession: what happens to the unique bonds formed in the military when the band is no longer one formed only of brothers?

One concrete strategy for facilitating comradeship and cohesion across gender-mixed units that has appeared in our studies seems to be specific to the Nordic armed forces: gender-mixed accommodation. In Norway, gender-mixed rooms for conscripts have been used for more than a decade; after initial trials in 2015, they were adopted by Denmark. In Sweden, it has been the standard form of accommodation for conscripts since the early 1990s. Ellingsen, Lilleaas and Kimmel (2016) have documented how the soldiers living in the gender-mixed rooms in Norway consider it a positive experience, and a way of building team spirit and camaraderie. Several women interviewed for their study stated that the gender-mixed rooms made it easier for them to become "one of the guys" (Ellingsen, Lilleaas & Kimmel 2016, p. 5). In the Nordic context, gender-mixed quarters seem to be framed as a way of producing cohesion for young conscripts and soldiers, creating close bonds beyond the brotherhood of men.

Despite the presence of women in most military platoons, the idea of the male-only group of soldiers as the necessary condition for cohesion to "work" in a military unit is not completely outdated. While conducting our ethnographic studies, we encountered stories of women who have been removed from ships or camps because relocating one woman was considered an "easier solution" to conflicts or cases of sexual harassment than the relocation of the men apparently

causing the problem in the first place. While these have not been first-hand accounts, they still indicate how women might be framed as those who “disturb” cohesion amongst men; if they are removed, efficiency is once again restored. While becoming more rare, according to MacKenzie (2015, p. 134) this has been “one of the most common arguments used to justify the combat exclusion in the US and elsewhere.” For MacKenzie, such opposition to the integration of women is based on a “cohesion hypothesis” that “presumes a positive relationship between group cohesion and soldier performance, and a negative relationship between the inclusion of women and the rates of bonding and trust necessary for such cohesion.” It has been suggested, however, that it is not the women themselves obstructing cohesion but the acceptance they are met with (MacKenzie 2015, p. 134–154). We might say, in other words, that cohesion is not compromised by women’s abilities but by expectations of both those abilities and of their gender. This was reflected in a summary report drafted after extensive trials with women in combat positions in the Danish armed forces through the 1980s. While evaluations of the trials were positive, it was remarked in the conclusion that even if the women “attempt to adjust to the prevailing norms,” integration could not finally be achieved in the combat units “because attitudes do not seem to offer the full acceptance of their presence” (Schlüter, 1986, p. 8–9) – a conspicuous attempt to police the boundaries of the military profession.

In general, the debate about the value of heterogeneous (that is, not all-male) units has been particularly heated when focusing on combat units. Studies have asked whether male soldiers would be concerned with protecting the women in the unit rather than remaining focused on their task in combat, or if they would start conflicts with other men (Simons, 2000, 2014; Maninger, 2008). Feminist scholars, on the other hand, have problematised the idealised depictions of the band of brothers, shedding light on the darker sides of comradeship when it becomes skewed towards hyper-masculine ethics and hence a serious threat to military professionalism (Winslow, 1997; MacKenzie, 2015).

Taking a quite different approach to the opposition of sameness and heterogeneity in regard to military efficiency, Rones and Steder (2017, 2018) have evaluated and analysed a recent trial with a women-only unit in the Norwegian armed forces. Their work documented how performance and behaviour were contingent on the gender context the women were in. While being the minority in a gender-mixed unit made women reproduce existing gender stereotypes and turn on each other as a means of distancing themselves from associations to a gender with low status, women showed themselves “able to cooperate harmoniously in an all-female situation” (Rones & Steder, 2018, p. 46). This interesting finding illustrates both how women are themselves involved in processes of ex-

clusion and the policing of boundaries, and how mere perceptions about gender may interfere with cohesion and integration.

Examining cohesion further, we are able to unfold the boundary work the concept furthers and authorises. While cohesion continues to be presented as a very positive force for the performance and efficiency of military units, it also has other, policing, effects. When assumed to presuppose similarity, cohesion can become the foundation for boundary work in the form of exclusion and discrimination. The question of what has occurred in the name of cohesion as women entered the military is complex. While ensuring inclusion and integration for some women, cohesion has recurrently and in various ways been used, also, as an argument for keeping women out of specific units – or out of military positions all together. Working to reinforce the gendered boundaries of the military profession, the issue of cohesion is tied closely to the two previous issues we have covered (see also Basham 2013), indicating that the sites where boundary work takes place are deeply entangled.

Discussion: Policing the Boundaries of an Exceptional Profession

Questions such as whether women's bodies can endure the stress caused by flying a fighter jet, or if the efficiency of male soldiers may be negatively affected by the presence of women, can on the surface appear to be legitimate concerns about women's inclusion in military work and combat. But, aired over decades, these concerns characterise women as a problem – an objective, straightforward problem calling for consideration and caution. By examining the discourse on three matters essential to the military profession, repeatedly raised when debating women's inclusion – combat, bodily abilities, and cohesion – we have tried to critically unfold how they can be understood in terms of boundary work. Rather than merely value-neutral arguments, we propose, these are instances of boundary work that aim to reinforce the military profession as male. This proposition is supported by the continual appearance of new arguments depicting women as the problem in still new ways and in different spheres of the profession. Initially concerning the profession's periphery, debates revolved around whether women could enter low-ranked positions or even hold a position classified as "military" (Sundevall, 2011). As women gained access to military jobs and started to prove their worth, and participation in combat and more prestigious fields of expertise were considered, positions closer to the profession's centre were then debated (Persson & Sundevall, 2019; Sløk-Andersen, 2014). Today, the "gendered frontier" seems to be the special operation forces, where arguments about women simply being insufficiently strong to do the job are slowly being challenged (Rones & Steder, 2017, 2018).

The military profession has encapsulated what Mellström (2013, p. 5) has referred to as “forms of male exclusivity where images of heroism and bravery are at the core.” This profession has been, and to some degree remains, tied to traditional notions of masculinity that have motivated soldiers to risk their lives and added to the prestige and status of military work. But the social status and recognition of a profession is never a given – and perhaps even less so for a profession frequently subject to the moral judgement and political agendas that comes with military work (Sørensen & Weisdorf, 2019). A need for policing the boundaries of the military profession also arises due to bureaucratic and political institutions challenging the autonomy and monopoly essential to any profession. This is not unique to the military profession but, rather, a general challenge as “new occupational categories ... make claim to professional or quasi-professional status are emerging from, or in alliance with, large bureaucratic organizations” (Suddaby, Bevirt & Strandgaard Pedersen, 2019). Such a questioning of autonomy, according to which professional outsiders can make claims about, and even shape, the inner workings of the military profession, may be seen when public administrators or politicians make significant decisions concerning the direction of the armed forces without the support of military professionals. This was the case in the Danish armed forces in the 1970s and 1980s as new legislation on gender equality in the labour market enabled women’s access to all positions within any profession, while the military organisation fought to uphold the ban on women’s participation in combat (Sløk-Andersen, 2014). This type of challenge to the boundaries of the military profession precipitates boundary work and makes visible an underlying idea of *military exceptionalism*: the perception of the military profession as exceptional due to the backdrop of life-or-death that comes with combat and warfare – which is in itself defined in contrast to the ordinary (Felski, 2000).

The tension between considering the military an organisation like any other and as an exception in which ordinary rules do not apply, and in which those outside the profession (politicians, for example) have no place interfering, was recently reflected in an interview with the Danish Minister of Defence who stated that the perception of the armed forces as “something very exceptional ... must come to an end” (Svendsen, 2020). This included the belief that “there are things that the minister and the politicians have no knowledge of and therefore should stay out of” (Svendsen, 2020). What the minister points to is here is that “the military tends to be regarded as an organisation out of the ordinary” (Persson, 2011, p. 72), not least within the profession itself. The assumption that not even the minister should interfere in how the military profession operates returns to the need for a profession to be autonomous and possessed of a monopoly on its own truths, in

relation to other occupations and to the state alike. When these are challenged, by a minister introducing a new diversity policy, for example, or a political coalition deciding to restructure the entire armed forces, members of the profession are likely to experience it as trespassing and to respond through acts of boundary work. This is not unique to the military profession; consider how doctors or schoolteachers have reacted to political intervention and reforms. But in drawing on the particular traits and risks tied to warfare, military professionals try to claim autonomy through a narrative about the exceptional character of military work within which those who have had their “boots on the ground” in a warzone (Tidy, 2016, p. 5) have a monopoly on truths about the profession. Through this lens of military exceptionalism, the preservation of boundaries acquires the status of legitimate defence against the trespassing of non-professionals – and consequently, women are framed as a problem.

It is important also to recognise how developments have seen female soldiers reconceived as a solution rather than a problem. As Witz (1992) noted, processes of exclusion are accompanied by processes of inclusion. UN Resolution 1325, positioning women as integral to successful peacekeeping, is an example of a process of inclusion contributing to a reshaping of the boundaries of the military profession (Persson, 2013; Persson & Sundevall, 2019). Through this resolution, and accompanying gender mainstreaming policies, a different, affirmative, discourse about women’s competencies and contributions has been established at an international level. This is also evident in many of the interviews we have carried out, with some interviewees even reflecting Svendsen’s (2018) claim that women’s inclusion can be used to lever modernisation and professionalisation and Mellström’s (2012) claim that changes in how wars are waged have gendered effects simply because they challenge what it means to be a soldier. As military work changes, so do gender dynamics within and around the military profession. And conversely, as gender policies, organisational, national and international, change the working conditions of both men and women, what it means to be “a real soldier” is redefined (Persson, 2013).

As shown throughout this chapter, professions and their boundaries are constantly challenged, defended and renegotiated. Above, we have used the case of women’s inclusion in the Danish and Swedish armed forces to reveal how the lens of gender can make visible unspoken ideas about the profession and professionalism that govern inclusion and recognition in the military profession. Referring to these processes as boundary work, we have shown how seemingly objective arguments against women’s participation in military work can also be considered attempts to police the boundaries around the military profession.

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3. Intergenerational Conflicts and Military Leadership: A Problem of Generations in Danish Military Education And Beyond

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In social and political contexts, war and other violent events have often been viewed as explanatory factors in the dividing lines between age groups; they divide one generational consciousness from another and influence how a generation should be understood as distinct from those preceding and following it. Landmark events, such as those of 1968, the Vietnam War or the 2008 financial crisis, have been the cue for a heightening of generational awareness “in accentuating time-based social differentiation” (White, 2013, p. 219). A certain kind of generational awareness present in the 1920s and 1930s has, for example, been linked to the effects of the First World War, differentiating those who experienced conflict first-hand and those who knew only the post-conflict peacetime. The events of September 11, 2001 may have linked social trauma and generational awareness in a similar way, and so we speak today of a “post-9/11 generation” (Edmunds & Turner, 2002a; 2005). It is here assumed that the terror attacks in New York, as a significant landmark event, have divided past and present, have affected certain groupings and have heralded a series of political decisions and actions with

long-term consequences. Ender, Rohall and Matthews (2014, p. 18), for instance, understand 9/11 as an event which fundamentally changed the United States and the relationship between American society and the U.S. military.

One explanation for invoking a generational view is the realist one, namely that certain socio-historical material factors demand this perspective to be taken (Eisenstadt, 1956; Edmunds & Turner, 2002b). In this chapter, the Danish Armed Forces' military contributions to the (mostly) American-led coalitions in Iraq and Afghanistan are understood to be material factors that cannot be ignored. These historical events have been constitutive of experiences with the potential to create generational consciousness, and to provoke discussions of professionalism – and, indeed, developments and changes – in the military profession.

Empirically, this chapter explores the experiences of military officers who received an elite education at a Danish military college over 10 months. It applies Mannheim's theory of generations and the idea of generational units to understand these individuals as a particular analytical entity bound together through shared problems and conflicts. The latter includes operational experiences; these have a collective effect, creating memories of operations and contributing to a new understanding of professionalism, including increasingly common professional concepts and practices.

Studies have shown that involvement in recent international conflicts has had an effect on the ways in which professional soldiers understand themselves. Tomforde (2006) uses the newly restructured Bundeswehr as an illustrative case, describing how foreign missions have created a mission-oriented military identity, understood by deployed soldiers to represent a transition from the classic trained soldier to a deployable trooper; King (2011, p. 198) supplements this finding by pointing at the effect that the Bundeswehr's foreign mission involvement has had on its institutional culture, "creating new collective memories about recent or current operations which are useful in uniting troops around new or continuing missions." The study presented in this chapter adds to these analyses of mission involvement and the effects of deployment on professional identities and culture by describing a group of Danish military officers' experiences and shared memories of a significant period, and considering how this may help shape a particular generation in the Danish armed forces.

For the last three decades, the Royal Danish Army has undergone a great transformation of structures, equipment and training methods, abandoning its traditional role of territorial defence and instead focusing on out-of-area military operations, among other actions, and reducing the size of the conscripted and reserve components and increasing the active (standing army) component (Jedig Jensen, 2008). Since being involved in the Yugoslav conflicts under U.N. mandate

in 1994, the Royal Danish Army has been committed to a number of U.N. and NATO peacekeeping and warfare operations. Most notably, it deployed forces to the Iraq operation from 2003 to 2007 and to the Afghanistan operation from 2002 to 2014.

Denmark supported Operation Iraqi Freedom in Iraq with 225 soldiers in 2003 to bolster the United States-led invasion (Danish Defence, 2020a). The first Danish troops were deployed to Afghanistan in 2002 as part of ISAF (International Security Assistance Force). Between 2006 and 2014, 15 Danish ISAF teams were deployed to Helmand (a total of 750 soldiers), making Denmark the largest force-contributing nation to ISAF per capita (SHAPE, NATO 2020). ISAF Team 1 participated in the longest battles that Danish troops have been involved in since 1864 (Danish Armed Forces, 2020b).

As of 2021, the Danish Defence Command deployed troops to operations in the Gulf and to the Sahel with the U.N., alongside an enhanced presence in Estonia. In addition, the armed forces have conducted multiple capacity-building tasks in several countries.

Sherman (2015) argues that the grand story of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is yet to be written and adds that some images are already taking form. This chapter contributes to this grand story by focusing attention on the generational worldviews and “generational style” (Mannheim, 1928/1952, p. 309) that have developed against the background of Danish soldiers’ participation in military operations abroad. Here, it is worth noting that what Schwartz (1996) coins “collective memories” about past and current operations have also intensified the potential intergenerational conflict in the military organisation and affected the power balance in the hierarchical authority structure.

Understanding Problems of Generations

Karl Mannheim, one of the major theorists of the generation concept, conceptualised how the social phenomenon of generations emerges and how a variety of generational units can exist within the same (physical/age group) generation. He saw generations as sources of opposition, and was interested in the role of generations as “carriers of intellectual and organizational alternatives to the status quo” (Edmunds & Turner, 2002a, p. 4). Referring to the eponymous “problem of generations” of his seminal text of 1928/1952, Mannheim contributed to our understanding of how the structure and distribution of opportunities and pressures or power between the established generation and the next might lead to conflicts and problems, arguing for a culturalist understanding of the concept with reference to individuals’ shared experiences and socio-historical reference

points. He rejected naturalistic theories and the notion of biological determinism, arguing that cohort generations (individuals who share the same birth year) were “endowed with a common location in the historical dimension of the social process” (Mannheim, 1928/1952, p. 290).

For Mannheim, and of relevance for this chapter, the distinction between three concepts – *generational location*, *generational actuality* and *generational unit* – is important. He defines the concepts in the following way:

[The fact of] belonging to the same class, and that of belonging to the same generation or age group, have this in common, that both endow the individuals sharing in them with a common location in the social and historical process, and thereby limit them to a specific range of potential experience, predisposing them for a certain characteristic mode of thought and experience, and a characteristic type of historically relevant action. (Mannheim 1928/1952, p. 291)

A location is defined by both time and space. Doctors born in the same year in the United States and in Denmark do not share the same location; neither do Danish dentists and Danish generals. The concept of being similarly located entails that individuals be “in a position to experience the same events, data, etc., and especially that these experiences impinge upon a similarly ‘stratified’ consciousness” (Mannheim 1928/1952, p. 297; see also Pilcher, 1994). Thus, location shapes “modes of thought, experience, feeling and action” (Mannheim, 1928/1952, p. 291). However, sharing a location is not enough to delimit a generation. A generation shares, also, a structure of opportunities – and is thus defined by being an actuality, collectively enjoying what Aboim and Vasconcelos (2014) understand as a similar mental order or a worldview based on a combination of historical responses to the group’s location. Mannheim argued that generations become an actuality:

. . . only where a concrete bond is created between members of a generation . . . in so far as they participate in the characteristic social and intellectual currents of their society and period, and in so far as they have an actual or passive experience of the interactions of forces which made up the new situation. (Mannheim, 1928/1952, p. 303–304)

. . . a *generation as an actuality* is constituted when similarly “located” contemporaries participate in a common destiny and in the ideas

and concepts which are in some way bound up with its unfolding.
(Mannheim, 1928/1952, p. 306)

Finally, within these groups of people sharing location and opportunities, such as access to career channels and upward mobility, there are generational units:

These are characterized by the fact that they do not merely involve a loose participation by a number of individuals in a pattern of events shared by all alike though interpreted by the different individuals differently, but an identity of responses, a certain affinity in the way in which all move with and are formed by their common experiences. (Mannheim, 1928/1952, p. 306)

The concept of generational units is a way to avoid projecting undue uniformity onto groups and certain individuals and to stress that no social unit is a unified and harmonious grouping. This means that particular generations consist of divergent groups of people, who differ in attributes, character and interests. Importantly, this allows generations to be approached as sites of “competing tendencies” (White, 2013, p. 238).

While Mannheim remains the inspirational point of reference for generation scholars, it is acknowledged that his theory is difficult to apply to the empirical study of generations (Bristow, 2016; Connolly, 2019). In that regard, Mannheim’s seminal work appears to be preoccupied with theorising social groupings in historical processes rather than applying the theory to empirical studies of generational relations in specific locations. Furthermore, his work does not precisely specify what constitutes an intergenerational conflict or tension in empirical terms. For this, it is relevant to turn to the work of Norbert Elias.

In line with Mannheim, Elias understood generations as webs of interdependent people (figurations) bound to one another by the similarity of their shared social-historical conditions and experiences (see, for instance, Elias, 1996; 2000). Instead of primarily understanding generations through generalised patterns of attributes, character and opinions, however, they are basically bound together by shared problems and conflicts. In his study *The Germans*, Elias (1996) developed a topic from *The Civilising Process*, namely that social processes of change must be understood in light of intergenerational relations between older social dominant groups who gradually lose power to younger groups struggling for dominance. This dynamic was what Mannheim coined “the problem of generations.” For Elias, the access to career channels, to positions at the top of an organisational hierarchy and more generally to upward mobility is a relatively contingent, un-

planned process as opposed to a deliberate strategy deployed by older generations to block or prevent younger groups accessing them:

The narrowing and widening of life chances, and opportunities for meaning in general and career chances in particular, for the younger generations of a society at any one time are processes that undoubtedly most strongly affect the balance of power between the generations. One could say that these processes form the kernel of social conflicts between the generations. (Elias 1996, pp. 243–244)

Empirically, Elias (1996, p. 243) demonstrates how different historical periods are more or less open to “generation circulation.” Periods of less circulation typically involve generational units feeling trapped in social systems dominated by older, stronger generations who control economic, social and cultural resources and determine what a meaningful life entails. This potentially leads to generational conflicts of loss of meaning and decoupled meaning fulfilment practices. An extreme case of this is the extra-parliamentary militant group of 1960s and 1970s West Germany, Rote Armee Fraction (RAF), which adopted an outsider position in relation to the established middle class of contemporary Germany. As a generational unit, sharing location and actuality, the members of the group found their search for purpose and a meaningful life blocked by the social order of an older generation whose opportunities and values they did not share.

Thus, there exists for Elias a strong relationship between, on one hand, generational conflicts and open or closed channels of opportunity for career opportunities and, on the other, occupational positions, the achievement of meaning and particular value and interest systems – and when and how these were shaped (Connolly 2019, p. 8).

Below, I focus on identifying how generations manifest in an organisational setting, taking into consideration professional military officers’ commonality of reference points, leading to the shaping of a generational unit with implications for subsequent behaviour and attitudes in the Danish armed forces.

Research Context and Data Collection

The empirical data analysed in this paper were collected as part of a field study conducted between 2016 and 2017 that investigated training and education for higher command and general staff work in the Danish armed forces.

My entrance to the field study was the army’s higher command and general staff officers programme, which has been institutionalised since the 19th century

(Clemmensen, 2015a). The purpose of the programme is to provide officers an education, with particular emphasis on the ability to hold army operative staff positions; it aims to endow officers with the capacity to contribute to the implementation of the analysis and evaluation of complex tactical and operational issues in a military strategic context (The Royal Danish Defence College, 2020). The programme is for mid-career officers selected for advancement in the armed forces.

The educational activities lasted 10 months and were mainly located at a military college. Other destinations were also visited as part of the programme (including an airbase, an international headquarters and some of the areas east of Berlin where the historic battle between the Red Army and the German forces was fought). The field study involved participant observation of operational exercises, classroom teaching, debriefings, official rituals and ceremonies, weeklong training tours, visits to monuments and participation in informal social gatherings over the course of the programme. At the conclusion of the fieldwork, I conducted 13 individual semi-structured interviews with participants (officers), each lasting an average of 60 minutes. I also conducted nine semi-structured interviews with directing staff (officers). The interviews covered a range of topics centred on the role of the staff officer and what it means to be a professional soldier, both in how the participants understood that role in their present work life and in light of their previous operational and non-operational experiences. For example, I was curious about how the participants brought experiences from Iraq and Afghanistan into the learning environment at the military college and the degree to which these experiences were integrated during the course. During the fieldwork, I became aware of some conflicting tendencies, which in the interviews I explored as problems related to specific social groupings, more specifically to generations. It is important, however, to recognise that the engagements and concrete work tasks connected to individuals' former deployments and contracts vary hugely in kind and nature.¹

Digital recordings of the interviews were transcribed and anonymised. Although this chapter's analysis presents only interviews, the observations helped me understand processes and procedures of staff work and, further, the character of operative military planning methods and doctrines. In the interview excerpts,

1 I thank Harald Høiback for reminding me of this important point – and the experienced reality of being from different armies despite wearing the same uniform. “The contrast between the sparse desert camp where we watched our comrades being flown out in boxes and the international REMF-fest up in Kabul couldn't have been more pronounced” (REMF = Rear Echelon Mother Fucker; JAFSO = Just another fucking supply officer; Hennessey, 2009, 27).

the officers participating in the programme and the directing staff are all referred to as “participants.” One argument for treating both directing staff and students as participants is that they form a particular group – what Mannheim would understand as a generational unit, as both participants and directing staff share some specific experiences grounded in a common location and time frame. This point of view is further unfolded in the chapter’s empirical analysis. Another argument is an ethical concern with protecting and further anonymising a small group of people who are in a career-sensitive phase of their professional trajectory.

The programme’s participants are in their late 30s. To be accepted into it, one must have an outstanding efficiency report and a recommendation from one’s superior. The Danish candidates are typically older than their British and American counterparts. The directing staff do not form a distinct group, but as part of their own progression through the ranks they are training and educating their colleagues of lower ranks. A staff member is also an officer who has graduated from the course relatively recently. Typically, the directing staff are only a couple of years ahead of the participants in the military career system. The staff hold their position at the war college two to three years before moving on to a new position. Sometimes they hold their position for an even shorter time.

In analysing the data, I coded the interviews to establish themes across the data set. Following the ideographic process of interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) to analyse and systematise the data, I was interested in coding for the details and nuances of the stories that individual participants told and the specific words they choose (see Gill, 2020; Roelsgaard Obling, 2020). When organising the superordinate themes, I used the technique of “abstraction,” “subsumption,” “polarisation” and “contextualisation” (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009; see also Smith & Osborn, 2008 for an introduction to IPA research methods). This analytical process made it possible to pay attention to each case individually before moving on to producing more general statements of the experiences of professional military officers that emerged during the research.

Findings

The analysis produced a number of subordinate themes organised within three master themes: (a) being part of a club, (b) common experiences and (c) conflicts and tensions. These themes represent distinct strands of the officers’ operational and non-operational experiences of a significant period in their work life but form, in part, an identity of responses.

Being Part of a Club

The participants described how their sense of being part of a unique group emerged over time through their involvement in foreign military missions, especially the more recent missions in Iraq and Afghanistan. Central to this understanding was the idea that they shared some common experiences that made them special.

Our group is ... the last of the old guard who have had a period [serving] where it became deadly serious. We have gained some experiences and some experiences that the next generations may or may not be able to get. We have some very specific and concrete experiences about what it means to have been responsible for military operations, in which people have died. Often very close to you, both physically and mentally. And that is of course not a success criterion in itself, that you have led units that have suffered losses; however, it makes you a part of a club. (Participant, Jonathan)

The expressed feelings of belonging to a social group – a club – are held together by the experience of some particular historical events, shared from more or less the same vantage point. Further, the club is defined by its uniqueness, especially with regard to concrete, common experiences of “dead seriousness,” which distinguishes it from both past and (perhaps) future groups.

As explained by another respondent: “The fact that you can talk about some things and have an understanding of the importance of what we do; an understanding, which people didn’t have before us.” These experiences, shared in context and time, are also described in the next quote:

All of a sudden, we came down to Afghanistan and Iraq, where figures for military losses are suddenly also a politically relevant factor and where people actually died, so they were shot at and they were blown to pieces and they lost limbs and everything possible, so it got more serious. Because before that time it was mega serious in case anything happened. However, nothing happened. We only practised for fun. We are a generation from people about my age and younger ones where it has... where it has been, well, where there has been blood and all those kinds of things. (Participant, Lloyd)

It is notable here how the respondents again draw upon aspects of the missions that clearly separate them from previous generations. “Seriousness,” a theme consistent with the idea of feeling special, works as a way to specify or delineate the generation.

We, well, we have the same mind-set; I think we are the generation, the people that are here at the moment; we have really experienced that things needed be done in real life, and I think that has done something good for our professionalism, but, yes, yes, I did get a little warm here, but this is something that means something to me.
(Participant, Thomas)

For some respondents, the feeling of belonging to a club is related not only to social conditions and experiences but to a degree also to biological factors such as belonging to the same age cohort: We are a very, very small group of people; the recruitment sample has been small and we are very few, as people at the same time are leaving the system. (Participant, Nicolas)

Here, the participant refers to the shortage of officers and other key personnel in the Danish Armed Forces, and to the fact that a high deployment frequency shared among a relatively small group of people might have caused some to leave the military (Jedig Jensen, 2008). Despite smooth mission recruitment, the pressure on a small group of officers has been high.

Common Experiences in the Generational Unit

According to Mannheim (1928/1952), generational units are bound together by an “identity of responses” formed by similar experiences. While different participants in this study spoke of different types of experiences which had shaped their working lives and sense of being professional military officers, the deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan formed a particular cluster or accumulation of experiences.

The whole issue of getting through Iraq and Afghanistan, and being part of the development that the army has undergone, and that the Danish armed forces have been through, and the fact that we had no idea what we went into, either in Iraq or in Afghanistan is, that is, it’s a little unique. (Participant, Jonathan)

The officers in what is here defined as a generational unit has, as the first generation in the Danish Armed Forces, experienced what the now-retired British

Lieutenant General Lamb described as the chaos of theatres of war (“I referred to Iraq as a three-dimensional contest, played in a dark room, while someone was shooting at you. I think I underestimated the game”; Lamb 2013, p. 151). The next participants confirm that this experience has, among other factors, helped create a generational consciousness, or what can also be explained as a particular way of thinking, seeing and acting:

There have been episodes during this education where I have been down, thinking “Okay, as long as nobody shoots at me, nobody is dead, and there are no wounded, then that’s fine and everything will be all right again tomorrow.” That’s what we learned in Afghanistan. Perhaps something exploded, but when I watched, nobody was dead, nobody was wounded, fine, then we continue. (Participant, Greg)

Just before it happened [a deployment], the Company commander, who was killed in Afghanistan, was getting replaced, so I was ready, so inside my head, the small wheels started to spin and then say, “well okay that might as well be you on the next team.” Then you start to put the tasks in perspective, so I also thought from back home that the probability for getting all my soldiers home again, it is practically non-existent. So mentally, if you mentally, I think, understand what the tasks are and what the consequences of the tasks may be, then you are also better prepared. ... A lot of things in our *métier* are about defining the task and thinking about the costs of that task. (Participant, David)

While some of the officers had previously served in Kosovo or in the Balkans, the character and costs of engagement in the conflict in Afghanistan, especially, have no parallels in Danish war history. Of 19,199 soldiers deployed, 214 were wounded and 43 killed in Afghanistan during the period 2002–14 (The Danish Defence 2020c).

Included in some of the described operational experiences were participants’ experiences with planning, collaboration and leadership: from concrete lessons learned to cultivation of a particular attitude, a “generational style” (Mannheim, 1928/1952, p. 309). It is notable again that the participants reflect upon some of the aspects of operations that separate them from other groups:

I think we have a different perception of what planning is and what war is, even though most of us have only tried it at a sub-tactical level... we've got a slightly different view of how it is utilised and I think it's really, really healthy. (Participant, Thomas)

This participant continues:

I think even if it has been tough, especially Iraq and Afghanistan, it has meant a lot to the profession. For example, such a thing as when we speak about what we teach, i.e., our doctrines, the procedures that are, they come under pressure when it is a stabilisation scenario; i.e., these are just some procedures, that do not always fit perfectly ... and how much collaboration between staff means. (Participant, Thomas)

Another participant follows up, adding a preliminary picture of intergenerational differences:

Mission commanding is a very good example. Because one thing is to say it, something else is to do it, it's tremendously difficult, and [officers] can do this, and they have tremendous confidence, and they have... they are trained to have specialists in their units, who are better than they are, where they have given them the responsibility ... My old boss he was the boss; he came in and spit out some words of wisdom, and then I put it into practice ... So this is another type of experience one has with the younger generation. Because it has been so much more ... if you go to war and risk dying from it, then it is better that we all have talked about it, and we agree that now this is it, what we do and we do it for each other. Previously, there was just commanding. And then we did it because we knew that the day we were put into war, we would probably all die. (Participant, Lloyd)

Besides the self-conceptions evinced in the interviews about this distinct generational unit, positively distinguishing it from other groups in the Danish Armed Forces, others also reflected upon situations in which the military work organisation did not work optimally: "Most of us have been part of dysfunctional staff organisations, because they haven't been cooperative, people have just come up with different positions." (Participant, Thomas). The participant develops his point of view here, discussing a specific deployment experience:

We experienced coming really, really under pressure, because we had the first casualties really, really fast – I was very close to the first two people we lost – and then things became very personal and, and at the same time, we were in a very complex environment. I was responsible for [anonymised task] and [anonymised task] in relation to [anonymised Afghan city], which is a city of fifty thousand people, where we did not really understand what was happening, so then we suddenly start to be put under pressure there, and at that same time we had no staff personnel that were collaborating, where you did not know each other, that is, and where you did not know the professional qualifications and competencies, that lay with the individuals. Then it really, really started to be up the hill also at the same time that you experience a chief of staff who did not lay out a line or who put down a completely crooked line; there were just so many things that built on each other. (Participant, Thomas)

Several participants described how the experience of seeing leadership in action, so to speak, provided them a different approach to leadership and leadership practices than those of previous generations:

Those people who sit today, and are chiefs in the Danish Armed Forces, have not had the experience; so I think, among other things, that leadership is ... to be able to explain ... and to be able to make sense and that you also have to listen, so in that circumstance we are different. I think doctrinally, we teach the same things, but the way to be a leader and the way to use staff and things like that ... that is different. (Participant, Lloyd)

The respondent above explains “the way to use staff,” for example, as “having specialists in their units, who are better than them, so they gave the specialists the responsibility.” Besides concrete experiences with what the management literature describes as “shared leadership” or “distributed leadership” (Ospina, 2018, p. 280), participants also experienced a chain of command, which did not always function in the expected way.

Staff had to make plans that subordinate units had to implement; then it was sometimes a disaster, because the units that would go out on the ground would not implement [the plan], sometimes it was basically mutiny, because you thought it was a shitty plan you

had been given, and you didn't want to follow it at all. (Participant, Lloyd)

Seeing operational leadership in action, or in Clausewitz's coinage "war proper" as opposed to "preparations for war" (1993, p. 151), thus included experiencing both well-functioning and dysfunctional superordinate-subordinate relationships, which, because of the context, had real, enduring effects (see Clemmensen, 2015b; see also Ledwidge, 2012, on British military failures in Iraq and Afghanistan). One measured effect, documented in a newspaper commentary signed by 52 younger officers, concerned Danish higher military commanders, whom the officers found to be disloyal and generally lacking professional judgement and understanding of actions on the ground (Friis Christensen, et al. 2012).

Another issue which may also bind group members together is something one respondent, describes as a profound duty to care:

The age group I'm a part of is a dying race; however, we believe in the narrative that abilities oblige you. One cannot not care now. Really, that's just not possible. (Participant, Greg)

This sense of a duty to care is also described by another participant as continuous reflection on some core competences of the profession:

The generations of younger people ... they have been at war; in other words, they have lost soldiers, they have experienced leaders who have pushed and made decisions based on agendas they didn't understand and stuff like that, so that's why I think they reflect a lot on these issues. (Participant, Lloyd)

The combination of seeing things from a particular position also implies, if we pay attention to the quote above, that the participants have experienced situations, such as blurred decision-making processes and moments of bad leadership, that have impacted the ways in which they see themselves and other groups today. According to Mannheim (1928/1952, p. 306), this ability to see things and experience so-called "psychological and intellectual impulses" and formative principles characteristic of the group and to "endow concepts with particular shades of meaning," such as concepts of leadership and decision-making, further strengthens the distinctiveness of this generational unit.

Conflicts between Generational Units

During the process of analysis, it not only became clear that the officers understood themselves as belonging to a special group – “a dying race” – but also that the group was at times in opposition to other, often older, groups in the military organisation. Many respondents disclosed mixed feelings about their relationships with individuals in the organisation, who were placed in higher positions in the hierarchical authority structure. The conflicting elements were often described as a conflict of experience, “All in all, we form an entire middle group. A common age group which has been at war and we are led by an entire age group who has never seen even the shadow of a deployment” (Greg) – and, memorably: “We just wait around to seize the power.” (Lloyd) The next participant meanwhile, states quite explicitly:

We are in the process of a generational battle to a greater extent than we have been before, because today we are a generation, not only of officers but also sergeants and constables, who have many deployments and a lot of experience gained at a fairly early stage in their careers, and we have a management group consisting of chiefs who have never been out and I think it is something that challenges us all, when we are to listen to them and let us inspire by what they say, why is it we need do that? (Participant, Nicolas)

The sense of belonging to a distinct social group which I previously described through the officers’ common mission experiences – and the impact in the form of, for example, ways of thinking about leadership, collaboration and decision-making processes – also appears as a line drawn between “us” and “them.” One participant described a situation he had encountered in a previous job, in which “they” tried to overcome the division:

What people are willing to do to compensate for this generation split ... they come and tell you about their own experiences, trying to bond. ... So, I remember I was in a job interview and a general all of a sudden told me that he had also been on some patrols himself, and he was very busy telling me about it, and it was an interview and he spent half an hour on telling me what he had experienced himself and some of the patrols he had been on. And I came in as a company chief and I had been sent to Afghanistan and been in war every third day and throwing air bombs and having helicopters flying all over the place, had dead soldiers and all sorts of other things.

And then he sat there telling me what it would be like to be in a war.
It felt like, it was just ... biggest compensation, it is such a thing. ...
It is like motorcycles and small cocks. (Participant, John)

The generational unit to which the officers in this study belong is bound together through similarities in their experiences and feelings and has, against that background, developed what Elias (1991/2001) would refer to as *we-feelings* and the contours of a *we-identity*. That identity is not available to everyone, as the quote above clearly indicates. Further, when individuals – here especially superiors and chiefs – try to become a part of the unit’s particular “mentality collective” and part of the “we,” it counteracts their efforts in two ways. First, the described situation displays an ignorance of the generational unit’s experiences, which here, as in other instances, are paid undue attention. Second, it creates feelings of uneasiness and disturbs the power balance in the relationship, in which feelings of disrespect occur on behalf of the unit. This disrespect is also associated with scepticism towards top-level individuals’ leadership capabilities, and especially the capability to create meaning and direction for the officer group:

You have not tried it yourself; you do not necessarily know what we have been through. And not because it has to be something they have to measure up against, but I think a little unconsciously, then it’s something they get measured on, unfortunately, and it can then sometimes be harder to get through with their messages if they do not simultaneously inspire, because if they just stand up and say “Now it’s just like this,” then they immediately meet some resistance. It has become clearer to people that there must be a clear purpose to the things they do. Especially in light of the things they have been out experiencing and doing. (Participant, Nicolas)

Throughout the staff officer and higher command education, different prominent guests were invited to follow the participants as they, for example, role-played war-planning exercises, such as how to plan for conducting a stabilisation operation with 30,000 men in a fictive Middle Eastern country. One general met the participants with the following words:

There wasn’t any plan for what we did in Helmand. You have all built up and ascribed to some operational habits and routines, which are stupid and do not fit with what we are confronted with today on the battlefield. So, don’t think you know about things.

Participants explained the situation by referring to how representatives from the older generation grew up with and were taught different ways of thinking and conducting conflicts and warfare, and thus inhabit particular value and interest systems, which contrast the generational unit's systems of relevance. In other words, this was a symptom of Mannheim's "problem of generations," which makes one generation criticise or not understand what happens in the next generation. One participant, for example, explained: "We grew up with a battlefield; in my career I haven't tried anything besides counterinsurgency, which is complex and really difficult to navigate in." The next participants add:

There is a rhetoric and a set of values and assumptions about warfare that characterise our senior officers today, let's say our generals and our colonels, and then there is a more experiential attitude to what war and armed conflict are, which has stored with my generation. It is very, very much about stabilisation operations, about COIN [counterinsurgency], which we have felt on body and soul, which forms a gap to the other set, which is largely based on the assumptions and ideas of the Cold War. (Participant, Paul)

We are a generation who have not been trained and experienced things, in the way they [the older generation] experienced it when they were young, the complexity of large-scale exercises, for instance. However, in return we live in a world today where the size of units and exercises and operations no longer has its justification in today's conflicts, so you could say it's somewhere irrelevant to talk about it; uh, we are in a completely different place today. (Participant, Nicolas)

Intergenerational conflicts present themselves in the development of military doctrine, too.

As the generational unit's experiences and specific know-how have not yet been fully institutionalised in the Danish military organisation, these elements of professional knowledge are not written into doctrine. As one participant concludes in a panel discussion:

The different worlds of generations must meet in our doctrine, which originally was based on "the Russian," but everyone in our generation has been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan, and this experience needs to be incorporated into the doctrine for staff work in the field. (Participant, Frank)

The point here is that incorporating the newest war theatre experiences does not mean that previous, conventional field rules must be rejected; instead, the two sets of rules must co-exist. Other participants express concerns that “by bypassing a doctrinal element, we are not whole” (“Martin”) and that “there is a ‘brain drain’ when you drop your focus on [counterinsurgency]; then the storage of experiences dries out” (“Anthony”). The challenges of recent stabilisation and security operations have called for new requirements and expertise, and in effect changes in professional work arrangements and training procedures (see, for example, Meese & Morgan, 2005 for a descriptions of the U.S. Army’s structural adjustments to these challenges). For years, the army has circled around and discussed how one might embrace and develop expert knowledge and expertise based on these new requirements in Danish doctrine. At the time of writing, however, those experiential lesson-learned principles collected and included here have not effectively been incorporated, institutionally speaking, at the level of Danish doctrine development or management processes to form integrated activities (see, for example, Soby Kristensen & Larsen 2010). Another dimension, which adds to this collective loss of memory, is that a larger part of the soldiers with experience from the ground are leaving the Danish armed forces.

In sum, the generational unit described in this article is a distinct generation in the “middle,” so to speak, of two other generations. It is led by a generation “who have not seen the shadow of a deployment,” as participants described, and followed by a younger generation who instead of focusing on counterinsurgency and “small wars” are back to focusing on and training for more conventional Western ways of warfare – that is, grand-scale force against force. Since 2018, change in the Danish army, as in other Western armies, has been greatly driven by the transition from counterinsurgency operations in the Middle East to countering a resurgent threat from Russia (Cohen & Radin, 2019; Danish Government, 2018). As the British Chief of Defence Staff General Nick Carter (2019) framed it in his annual Royal United Services Institute speech: “We have returned to an era of great power competition, even constant conflict.” There is, however, considerable uncertainty about the direction that Western forces will follow in the face of rising geopolitical competition and conflict. Indeed, this uncertainty is a mixed source of curiosity and concern:

To really grasp what is coming, that is not possible; maybe the generation or the virtues, that I value and which my generation carry with them as a consequence of their experiences, in fact is not going to reflect what will come. (Participant, Paul)

Michael Howard's often quoted comment, written in peacetime in the 1970s, is relevant to the generational awareness expressed above:

If there were to be another conflict the first battle may be the last ... the social changes of our time may so transform the whole nature of warfare that the mode of thought of the military professional today will be, at best, inadequate or, at worst, irrelevant. This is the kind of change which we must today be prepared and able, if necessary, to adjust ... the alternative is disappearance and defeat. (Howard, 1974, p. 7–8)

To adapt to future challenges may be a question of being able to build on past experiences, making adjustments for new, technology-infused contexts, among other things. As Klein (2017, p. 126) points out, “experience is about how to use our knowledge to tune our attention.” Experience here includes being able to “see” the way things work, seizing opportunities and anomalies, and being aware of one's own limitations. Thus, our background can “sensitize us to cues or patterns that others might miss.” This is a way to link future ways of warfare back to historical realities and principles (see, for example, Freedman, 2017) and to fight the temptation to think that it is possible to stare into the future and come up with what to do next *ex nihilo*.

Concluding Discussion

Against the backdrop of the role of the Danish armed forces' active participation in international conflicts, in this chapter I have explored the creation of a generational consciousness through the officers' experiences of deployment, the lag in operational experiences between generations, and the associated struggles between the generations connected to social phenomena such as the lived fulfilment of meaning. I have argued that the social and formative effects of mission participation (though not exclusively the actual or concrete missions) are central to the emergence of a generational consciousness which demarcates, even cuts off, that generation from past and future generations.

As explored elsewhere (see Roelsgaard Obling, 2020), “being a soldier” means different things for different people across generations in the Danish armed forces. This is also true within the investigated generational unit, a body which, rather than sharing an overarching common identity, is bound together by many different things. The internalisation of new tasks, responsibilities and recognition has been one acknowledged effect of recent mission involvement. Mannheim's

perspective offers insight into the ways in which violent historical events can trigger new forms of professionalism, galvanising generations through organisational activity. According to Evetts (2003, p. 772), this is a type of “professionalization from within” and points to certain historical and political contexts in which the profession is permitted to flourish.

This chapter adds to the existing debate on the professionalisation of armed forces by addressing changes in the outlook and behaviour of an institution composed of individuals and social groups. Departing from the theory of generations, one of its contributions is the focus on how a group of Danish officers form a generational unit distinct from past and future generations of officers on account of their experiences of recent international missions and war theatre participation. Among other things, this has introduced a gap, which continues to grow, between the specialised experiential knowledge, values and interests of the generational unit and those of the older generation in the military organisation. It is, of course, necessary here to acknowledge that there exist many exceptions to this “problem of generations,” and that there are Danish generals and colonels with substantial deployment and mission experience.

In addition, there exist individual differences concerning how, on one hand, the generational unit’s members see themselves and their relationship to others in the established military hierarchical authority structure, and, on the other hand, how others attempt to contain the aspirations of the members. Addressing a generational gap and intra- and intergenerational tensions is, however, an issue of concern in relation to a well-functioning and effective military organisation. This includes awareness of the potential growth of a polarised outlook – an awareness affording the military the opportunity to avoid a potential impediment to the presentation of a unified front and, thus, new problems of internal and external coordination. Future research could examine how groups within the armed forces are shaped by different national and international factors and consequently may have developed very different professional ethos and values. This remains a matter of debate.

When attending to “a problem of generations,” one may present the common-sense statement that younger generations are always ahead of, or more progressive, than elder generations. According to Mannheim, however, this is not necessarily the case; much depends on the tempo of social change, which shapes each generation’s worldviews. In that regard, Mannheim’s perspective is resolutely anti-deterministic and retains a strong structural dimension (Milkman, 2017). Mannheim’s preoccupation with social structure and culture recalls Simmel and Weber, both of whom are clear influences on his work. As such, the generational perspective offers a way to think about, and empirically explore, social change

and progress and to present a way to analyse the processes of generation-related struggles and conflicts in organisations – which in turn shape and transform these organisations.

However, it is important to mention some reservations concerning generational analysis. As noted by White (2013), there appears to be an overlap between generational consciousness and the social formations the term is used to describe; it may, indeed, generate these formations itself. The concept of generation is both a category of analysis and a practice in the way that it, as a social category, can describe and explain social groupings and differentiation, and be imposed by individuals – scientists and practitioners – to legitimise a specific vision of reality or to evoke the inclusivity of a grouping (Bourdieu, 1991; see also Jaeger, 1985). According to Purhonen (2016), generational interpretations can seek to either promote the value of the group in question or reduce the value of a specific group. As a form of labelling and categorisation, these interpretations are hardly ever disinterested but are, rather, normative and bound up with cultural, professional and political ambitions and motives. For the researcher, this prompts the critical question of who, precisely, is doing the interpretation.

Proposing the generation argument, there is a risk, furthermore, of overlooking the contradictions and diversity of attributes and experiences given within a social grouping. This also includes a potential downplaying of diversity and divergence among the individuals in what is understood here to be a particular generational unit. This study has raised the generation issue while avoiding projecting claims on larger groups of people at the level of the greater society for instance. Generation intellectuals who have attempted to emphasise a particular “zeitgeist” by defining a whole generation of young people as “millennials” or “Generation Z” have done this with more or less success. Instead, I have highlighted some significant temporal and spatial factors in a limited group of military officers defined by a commonality of reference points in order to make my claims empirically plausible and not risk “lapsing into caricature” or seeking truths of a higher order (Jaeger, 1985, p. 288; White, 2013, p. 241).

Previous studies have identified different ways in which Western armed forces have been professionalised, particularly through focusing on new expert knowledge and expertise. This chapter has argued that through applying a generational perspective it is possible to address how professionalisation as social change takes form as intra- and intergenerational relations. This perspective warrants further attention from organisation scholars and military sociologists who aspire to expose and discuss developments of, and changes in, the military profession.

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4. Facing the Warrior: An Ethnographic Montage on Post-9/11 Warriorisation of Danish Military Professions

Thomas Randrup Pedersen

The best subjects of modernist ethnography are those which have been heavily represented, narrated, and made mythic by the conventions of previous discourse.

GEORGE MARCUS (1990, p. 7)

“Welcome to the warrior club.”

This was the message Sergeant (Sgt) Eik texted me a few years back on receiving the news that I had taken up a position in the Danish Armed Forces.¹ I had come to know Eik, who serves in the fighting arms of the Danish Army, as one of my informants during my doctoral studies. His message put a smile on my face. Not only did it seem to indicate that I had become a card-carrying member of a military organisation, even a league of warriors, in spite of my status as a civilian (and not a very warlike one, at that); the message constituted yet another instance of a phenomenon that has frequently sparked my ethnographic wonder: the “warrorisation” I identify, and describe below, as the association of mili-

¹ I have changed the names of my informants to shield their identities.

tary professions with the figure of the warrior. Interestingly, it is a phenomenon that has become increasingly noticeable among both insiders and outsiders to the armed forces in post-9/11 Denmark (see also Pedersen, 2019c).

How do we explain the rising popularity of the notion of the warrior across civilian and military spheres in early 21st century Denmark? Why is warriorhood increasingly ascribed to, and claimed by, members and ex-members of the Danish Armed Forces, supplementing, even replacing, time-honoured terms such as “officer,” “soldier,” and “veteran”? What is at stake? What is in a name? What does the change of language tell us about military professions in transformation and changing relations between armed forces and society?

This chapter investigates military professions and civil-military relations through an anthropological analysis of the cultural figure of the warrior. Conceiving “warrior” to be a professional identity and thereby as a constructed, contested, and contextual notion (Jenkins, 2014), I explore what warrior identities “do” to military professions and civil-military relations across different contexts, be that instrumentally in terms of expertise and corporateness (Huntington, 1957) or existentially in terms of senses of agency (Jackson, 2013; see also Coker, 2007). I further examine how warrior identities are “done” not merely discursively, but also performatively (Goffman, 1959; Jenkins, 2014; see also West & Zimmerman, 1987). By implication, I shed light on those “doing” warrior identities, either in terms of institutional subject formation, or in terms of intersubjective fashioning of self and other (Foucault, 1977; Rapport, 2003; Jenkins, 2014). Finally, I scrutinise why Denmark has witnessed an emergence of warrior identities within the past decade, especially.

Denmark is not the only country where warriorisation is on the rise. The phenomenon can also be observed in the United States and in the United Kingdom. In fact, Gibson (1994) has demonstrated that a widespread warriorisation of American (popular) culture emerged as early as in the 1980s in response to the American failure in Vietnam. Then, the “new warrior hero was only occasionally portrayed as a member of a conventional military or law enforcement unit,” (Gibson, 1994, p. 9). In post-9/11 America, however, warriorisation has not merely expanded into military cultures, it has, indeed, become increasingly institutionalised, as evidenced by the U.S. Army’s adoption of its “Warrior Ethos” in 2003 (Loeb, 2003) and by its “Warriors Wanted” and “What’s Your Warrior?” recruitment campaigns launched in 2018 and 2019, respectively (Cox, 2018; Rempfer, 2019). In both America and Britain, the growing warriorisation of military professions has recently sparked debates over the ethical, historical, and social plausibility of referring to “our troops” as “warriors” (Angry Staff Officer, 2016; Ricks, 2016; Beehner, 2019; Noordally, 2020; W., 2020; Matthew,

2020). In Denmark such debates are yet to be seen in earnest, and I hope the present chapter will help stimulate them.

As for the question of why Danish military professions have been increasingly warriorised in the post-9/11 years, two answers seem plausible. First, given that the United States and the United Kingdom constitute Denmark's closest military coalition partners in the "war on terror," one could argue that warriorisation in the Danish case is a matter of Americanisation/Anglicisation (see Høiback, this volume). Second, given that Denmark broke with a long history of pacifism/defeatism with the deployment of Danish troops to combat missions in the wars in Afghanistan (2002–2014) and Iraq (2003–2011), one could argue that warriorisation in Denmark is a question of reviving a "warrior spirit" – that is, the military value of killing and risking getting killed, which had faded away during "peacetime" (see Holting, this volume). While both arguments have their merits on macro-historical levels, they do not tell us much about present-day warriorisation on either meso- or micro-historical/sociological levels. Accordingly, I pursue an alternative methodological approach here. With the aim of drawing a multi-perspectival and multifaceted portrait of the cultural figure of the warrior, I adopt the technique of ethnographic montage to present my empirical material and my analytical reflections in a relatively discontinuous and subject-decentred manner (Marcus, 1990). This potentially makes contradictory, even conflicting, "gaps" visible between different warrior identities – or between what I describe as different "faces of the warrior."

In an attempt not merely to represent the world but to re-textualize it in an unstable and incomplete form, I draw inspiration from the cinematic trope of montage. Initially, the montage method was conceptualised by George Marcus (1990) as an alternative approach to ethnographic writing – a modernist approach which disrupts the coherent narrative of much social science writing (Marcus, 1990; Willerslev & Suhr, 2013). Broadly speaking, montage "simply implies the joining together of different elements in a variety of combinations, repetitions, and overlaps" (Willerslev & Suhr, 2013, p. 1). Crucially, the result of bringing disparate elements together in a montage is, as Willerslev and Suhr argue, never "simply the sum of the single components. Something extra, a surplus or an excess, is always produced." Conceiving this "extra" as opening a "gap" through which "the invisible becomes present as an absence of visibility" (Willerslev & Suhr, 2013, p.5) in terms of fuzziness, dissonance or incongruence, montage allows for amplification of the invisible, for highlighting fragmentary complexities and co-existing contradictions of social reality (Marcus, 1990; Willerslev & Suhr, 2013).

The military professions I study in this chapter are those of the officer corps and the enlisted ranks, mainly in the Danish Army. I examine warriorisation

among the professional Danish combat troops with whom I have conducted fieldwork as an “embedded anthropologist” before, during and after deployment to Helmand, Afghanistan (Pedersen, 2017b; 2019b) and later to Anbar, Iraq.² Furthermore, I explore warriorisation within a number of civilian and military spheres beyond the ranks of my informants, although my informants arguably remain entangled in these spheres to varying degrees. Specifically, this chapter juxtaposes fragments from ethnographic fieldwork with tankers, infantry- and recce men and from my textual analyses of discursive material produced by Danish Defence institutions, military scholars, organisations supporting Danish veterans³ and public culture outlets. The chapter moves in and out of montage components, comprising interview snippets, news articles, blogs, dictionary entries, fieldnotes, research outputs, films, TV series, organisation websites and social media posts, all combined with my own analytical reflections, in an attempt to sketch and make sense of the multifarious faces of the warrior. In what follows, the montage specifically juxtaposes eight thematically compounded “warrior faces,” gradually shifting its emphasis from contexts to texts, from discursive material to fieldwork data.

Warrior Face #1: the War-Fighter

Deriving etymologically from the German *Krieger*, the Danish *kriger* (i.e., warrior) is defined in *The Danish Dictionary* (DSL, 2021) both as a “person who fights or will fight in a war – in particular related to historical or foreign affairs” and as a “(modern) soldier.” According to the dictionary, the latter definition is often used humorously. If we stick to the first definition of warrior as “war-fighter,” it strongly resonates with the fact that the momentum of the current warriorisation of military professions in Denmark has, up to a point at least, coincided with the increased militarisation of Denmark’s foreign policy activism in the post-9/11 years (see also Holting, this volume). After the mass slaughters in the First World

2 This chapter draws upon my ethnographic fieldwork with Danish contingents in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and in Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR). The ISAF fieldwork forms part of my doctoral studies on soldierly becomings, while the OIR fieldwork is part of my current research on vicarious warriorhood. The ISAF fieldwork had a duration of one year, including three field trips to Camp Bastion, Helmand, involving forty principal informants. The OIR fieldwork has so far lasted two and half month, including two field trips to Al Asad Air Base, Anbar, involving twenty principal informants. The field research was designed as multi-sited and multi-periodical, involving

3 In Denmark, a “veteran” is officially defined as a person who has been deployed to an international operation at least once (Danish MoD, 2016). participant-observation, visual methods and qualitative interviews.

War, any traditional notion of the warrior as a figure associated with glory and heroism (Coker, 2007) was largely consigned to the dustbin of history across Europe (Howard, 2009; Henningsen, 2019). In the case of Denmark, however, the figure of the warrior has gradually been revived alongside Denmark's military engagements in the American-led wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. In particular, the deployment of Danish troops to southern Afghanistan's Helmand province (2006–2014) seems to have catalysed a rise in warriorisation. After all, the deployment of Danish troops to Helmand in a war-fighting role and their frequent participation in regular combat were without precedent in the post-1864 era.

Consequently, contrary to *The Danish Dictionary*, the newly reinvigorated term “warrior” is frequently used in dead earnest, reflecting the increased seriousness of Danish soldiering in the early 21st century (see also Høiback; Roelsgaard Obling, both this volume). As testified by the Monument to Denmark's International Efforts since 1948, among the 111 Danish personnel who did not return alive from more than 20 different missions, 8 lost their lives in Iraq and 44 in Afghanistan. Indeed, among the forty-nine Danish soldiers “killed in action” since 1992, six were deployed to Iraq and thirty-seven to Afghanistan. In comparison, Denmark's military engagement in Afghanistan has potentially resulted in the killing of more than 1,000 “Taliban fighters” and other “insurgents” (Thomsen & Svendsen, 2013). No wonder, then, that it was during the heyday of the Danish Helmand campaign that the growing warriorisation began to disclose itself. “Warrior,” I suggest, fulfilled the need for a new notion, a new identity, however archaic or outlandish, to distinguish the new breed of offensive Danish troops from their predominantly defensive predecessors of the past 150 years, whether these antecedents had been the defenders of national territory or international peacekeepers.

Warrior Face #2: the Distant Other

Warrior: “person who fights or will fight in a war – *in particular related to historical or foreign affairs*” (DSL, 2021; my emphasis). While the first part of *The Danish Dictionary*'s definition can apply to those outside the military professions, the second part implies a casting of “the warrior” as a distant Other in time and space – a Spartan or a samurai, for example. Significantly, in terms of historical affairs, the current warriorisation of military professions in Denmark is not unprecedented. As indicated by war memorials and “warrior graves” (*kriegergrave*), particularly in the southern part of Denmark, Danish soldiers killed or fatally wounded on the battlefields of the two Schleswig Wars were occasionally commemorated by posterity and among their contemporaries as warriors. This was especially so in the case of the victorious war of 1848–1850, while the popularisation of the warrior

was apparently much less pronounced in the case of the disastrous war of 1864 (Cohen, 1851; Cohen, 1865; Boeck, 1940). This past warriorisation, I suggest, was intimately tied to the current of romantic nationalism in Europe at the time, which in Denmark and elsewhere tapped into the Nordic revival (Wawn, 2000; Adriansen, 2003; Glenthøj, 2012). This revival, which has continued without interruption until today, has often entailed simplifying representations of Vikings as adventurous explorers, heroic defenders of the realm or noble savages (Wawn, 2000; Adriansen, 2003; Dyvik, 2016). Such romantic Viking imaginaries among “our troops” can be traced back to Denmark-Norway’s involvement in the Napoleonic Wars (Glenthøj, 2012), and today warlike Viking imageries are very much back in fashion in the Danish Army (Pedersen, 2017b; Frisk, 2019; Lund, 2020).

As for foreign affairs, the names applied to the present-day enemies of Denmark and its allies are worth noting: “Islamic State fighters” (*IS-krigere*), “Taliban fighters” (*Taleban-krigere*) and “foreign fighters” (*fremmedkrigere*). In Danish, these enemies are referred to as “warriors” (*krigere*), not “fighters” (*kæmpere*). These enemies, or “adversaries” in modern army lingo, are not organised into internationally recognised state forces, and the Danish warrior rhetoric on these “enemies of the state” seems to be drawing on a Eurocentric, Clausewitzian notion of the “warrior spirit” (Clausewitz, 2007, 145): that is, a term above all applicable to primitivised, racialised, or, as I would add, tribalised or ethnicised people in the colony and post-colony, such as *Maori-krigere* or *Mujahideen-krigere*. Thus, contrary to the Clausewitzian “warrior spirit” that creates an “abnormal” distance between self and other, the revival of Danish warriorhood, I suggest, actually narrows the gap between self and other, both at the discursive and at the organisational level. As for the latter, numerous European militaries in the post-Cold War era, including the Danish, have adapted to “wars of choice” rather than “wars of necessity” (Haass, 2009). Armed forces throughout Europe have transitioned from geographically dispersed national organisations with lower ranks of mostly conscripted citizen soldiers to downsized organisations with practically every echelon staffed by volunteers and increasing numbers of professional troops (King, 2011), thereby arguably widening the gap between civilian and military communities (Ricks, 1997; Coker, 2007). This professionalisation of militaries in Europe and beyond has even been described as a process by which “our troops” enter a “warrior caste” (Schafer, 2017) or a “warrior class” (Coker, 2007; Angry Staff Officer, 2016) of their own. Thus conceived, “our troops” may arguably form an exceptionalist “warrior elite” (Huntington, 1957; see also Brænder; Ydén, both this volume), assumingly resonating with the social organisation of distant “warrior societies,” be that in Ancient Greece, or in the colonies and post-colonies of European empires.

In the case of Afghanistan, the discursive level, for its part, has involved a

mirroring process through which Danish forces who fought against “*Taleban-krigere*” arguably became “warriors” themselves, thereby, put somewhat provocatively, disregarding Nietzsche’s famous warning “Anyone who fights with monsters should take care that he in the process does not become a monster” (Nietzsche 1998, p.68). After all, warriorisation, it seems, may harbour a monstrous journey into the abysmal “heart of darkness” (Conrad, 2002). This appears, for instance, to be the case when the Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force invoked a notion of “warrior culture” as the explanation for possible war crimes committed by members of the Australian Special Air Service Regiment during the war in Afghanistan (Svendsen, 2020). In the Danish case, I would contend that warriorisation of both the Taleban and the Danish forces involves a discursive levelling of the playing-field and stresses the mirroring of “our” and “their” respective fighting capacities, as if the war in Afghanistan were fought between equal combatants in a symmetrical conflict. In conceiving “our adversaries” and “our troops” as “warriors,” we de-contextualise the war politically and socio-economically, placing the Taliban and the Danes on the same level, morally speaking, insofar as “both parties” embody the “warrior spirit” and thus arguably subscribe to a common “warrior ethos” (Coker, 2007).

Warrior Face #3: the (Army) Officer

In 1988, Sørensen published *The Danish Officer: From Warrior to Administrator*, arguing that the professional identity of the Danish officer after the Second World War had shifted from warrior to administrator as a result of the growing civilianisation and demilitarisation of the officer profession in Denmark and elsewhere in “the West” (see also Berndtsson; Victor Tillberg; Ydén; all this volume). The Cold War officer had become a “desk warrior” at best. All the same, Sørensen’s portrait of the officer profession was soon to be challenged by the fall of the Berlin Wall and Denmark’s subsequent military activism, which has involved the deployment of Danish troops to a large number of international operations throughout the world.

The figure of the warrior was initially revived within the ranks of the Danish officer corps in the mid-1990s, following the end of the Cold War. At that time the slogan “warrior, diplomat and corporate manager” (“*kriger, diplomat og virksomhedsleder*”) started to gain ground at the Royal Danish Military Academy (Clemmesen, 2020). In other words, back in the 1990s, the institutional subject formation of Danish (army) officers began to encapsulate the “officer profile” (Vejre, 2002) by which the ideal officer must be able to master the professional identities of “the warrior,” “the diplomat” and “the corporate manager.” Indeed, as evidenced by an officer recruitment event at the Royal Danish Defence College

as late as 2019, this officer profile is still in use as a description of the identities into which one moulds cadets enrolled in the College's Diploma Programmes in Military Studies (Rasmussen, 2019). Importantly, the officer profile arguably claims that the officer profession has a monopoly on the warrior identity in terms of the expertise and the corporateness acquired through the education and training offered by the military, naval, and air force academies (see also Nørgaard, Thorbjørnsen & Holsting, 2008; Nørgaard, 2010; Danielsen, 2018).

Throughout the years, the officer profile has been both celebrated (Vejre, 2002; Møller, 2005; Helsø, 2010) and contested among officers and military scholars (Clemmesen, 2009; Sjøgren, 2012; Nyemann & Staun, 2020). Colonel Lars R. Møller (2004), for instance, has disagreed with what he perceived to be the distribution of the three identities particularly at the higher echelons of the Danish Armed Forces: 10% "warrior," 30% "diplomat," and 60% "corporate manager." Advocating more warriorisation, Møller insisted that the Danish Armed Forces should not be "a coffee club of administrators and paper-pushing bureaucrats but an organisation whose ultimate purpose is to direct a good deal of destructive violence to where there is need for it." He then arguably invokes "the warrior" as the *raison d'être* of the military, as a claim to professional autonomy, and as an identity-marker distinguishing the officer profession from civilian occupations, thereby "pushing back" against the civilianisation and demilitarisation of the officer corps (see also Brænder, this volume).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, "the administrator" was apparently stowed away during the officer recruitment campaign targeting Danish high-school students between 2008 and 2012 –at the height, that is, of the Danish Helmand campaign. The recruitment campaign was tailor-made for each of the three branches of the Danish Armed Forces. Interestingly, while the sub-campaigns for the Navy and for the Air Force were designated "Sea Student" (*Stud Sø*) and "Air Student" (*Stud Luft*), respectively, the sub-campaign for the Army did not go by the name of "Land Student" (*Stud Land*) but, rather, the somewhat sexier title "Warrior Student" (*Stud Kriger*). In that sense, the Army campaign was monopolising "warrior" as an identity that applied only to the Army's officer corps. What is more, Warrior Student neatly captures the field of tension inherent in the demand for contemporary officers to possess both military and academic competencies. "Warrior first, academic second," as it was phrased in the Danish Defence news in the face of the restructured officer educations in 2008 (Lærkholm-Bengtsen, 2008). In this context, "warrior" is invoked to make a claim to professional autonomy, pushing back specifically against a growing academisation of the officer corps, which has sparked concern, perhaps even an identity crisis, over the future of the officer profession (Kaplars, 2012; Brøndum, 2017; see also Berndtsson, this volume).

Warrior Face #4: the Veteran

The passage from military to civilian life on returning from deployment in the warzone is often difficult, and in 2008 the Danish Institute for Military Psychology launched the Acclimatisation and Reintegration (A&R) Programme to ease the transition. Emphasising recovery, stress reduction, social interaction and job search skills, the programme, lasting three months, aimed to prevent psychological after-reactions by supporting the transition from “battle-mind” to “home-mind” (Jonasen, 2009) – or “from warrior to civilian,” as it was put in the Danish Defence (2008) news. Here, one becomes a “warrior” through transformative war experiences altering one’s state of mind. “The warrior” is a veteran with a hyper-vigilant and adrenaline-craving “battle-mind,” and the A&R Programme seeks to “de-warriorise” veterans to ease their way back into civilian contexts in which the warrior would be inappropriate, potentially unhealthy, even dangerous, to set free.

Today, depictions of “battle-minded” veterans living in the midst of “home-minded” civilians have naturally found their way into Danish popular culture. Take, for instance, Christopher Boe’s 2018 crime drama, the TV mini-series *Warrior*. CC, the principal male character, is a hard-hitting veteran with years of experience in warzones across the world. He leaves the military only to embody the slogan “once a warrior, always a warrior” as he gets caught up in conflicting loyalties between law-enforcing police and law-breaking bikers. As such, “the warrior” is represented as a violent and morally ambiguous character. By comparison, Janus Metz’s box-office hit of 2010, the war documentary *Armadillo*, portrays transformations of inexperienced soldiers into combat-proven veterans. In 2011, *Armadillo* won the Bodil Award in the Best Documentary category. Reflecting the strong debate *Armadillo* had provoked in the Danish public at its opening the previous year, the Award Committee (2011) stated the film was

an extremely sober-minded documentary on young Danish men that slowly but surely, on the often-meaningless patrols in Afghanistan’s Helmand province, become warriors, and perhaps, perhaps not, liquidate injured Taliban fighters. *Armadillo* is ... an inescapable testimony to Denmark’s national loss of innocence.

Again, “the warrior” is a morally dubious, dark-hearted figure that one may come to embody through one’s subjectifying experiences with brutal and brutalising acts of combat – acts through which the innocence of youth is lost, and the innocence of a nation, which for decades had grown accustomed to regarding itself as peaceful, along with it (Daugbjerg & Sørensen, 2017). Regardless

of what we make of *Armadillo*, the documentary draws a portrait of what has become known as Denmark's new "warrior generation" (*krigergeneration*). This notion is occasionally used in the Danish public by the media, military officers, and military scholars, myself included (Sørensen, 2017; Pedersen, 2017b). The notion applies to Danish forces who served in the bloody wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The "warrior" of the "warrior generation" is a claim to generational corporateness, a claim to a generational identity ascribed to veterans by virtue of their subjectivity-formatting deployment to warzones where "our troops" were regularly engaged in regular combat. Consequently, this warrior generation excludes other generations such as the current post-Helmand generation, the older Balkan generation, let alone the still-older Cold War generation. Affiliation to the warrior generation is not merely to be set apart from other soldiers and veterans. Insofar as war and combat experiences constitute a yardstick for military expertise, not to mention for military adventures and military masculinities (Dawson, 1994), the notion of the warrior generation is implicitly hierarchising the different generations, placing Afghanistan and Iraq veterans at the top of the professional, masculinised value hierarchy (see also Roelsgaard Obling; Sløk-Andersen & Persson, both this volume). As indicated by my research with Danish OIR troops, this internal ranking might help explain why the current post-Helmand warriorisation not merely lingers on but might even be growing across both the "warrior generation" and the "post-Helmand generation." To be sure, while this is not the case for all Danish army units, not even for the fighting arms (Bangsgaard & Lintrup 2020), it is definitely so for some (Jacobsen, 2020; Lund, 2020).

Warrior Face #5: the Specialist, the Exerciser, and the Lifestyler

In recent years, the notion of the warrior has enjoyed a resurgence in relation to vocations, or specialisations, across both civilian and military spheres in Denmark and elsewhere (Ricks, 2016). In civilian contexts, we may encounter "internet warriors" (*internetkrigere*), "culture warriors" (*verdikrigere*) or "soccer warriors" (*fodboldkrigere*), among others. Here, "warrior" constitutes an identity associated with dedication, persistence, advocacy, and aggression. In military contexts, on the other hand, we may, for instance, come across "information warriors" (*informationskrigere*), "drone warriors" (*dronekrigere*) or "cyber warriors" (*cyberkrigere*). In this respect, the status of warrior is ascribed to military specialists in the non-fighting arms regardless of specialities and implied expertise. As such, "warrior," I suggest, entails a claim to military kinship, a shared identity, an inclusive corporateness, applying to all service-members across both specialisations and arms (see also Loeb, 2003).

In 1990 a Danish mobilisation exercise was given the rather odd title *Gæv*

kriger – Valiant Warrior (Kandborg, 1991). More recently, Danish forces have recurrently taken part in one of Europe’s largest military exercises, the British-led Joint Warrior. The biannual, multinational exercise is the successor to the Joint Maritime Course dating back to the 1950s, renamed Neptune Warrior in 2006 before arriving at its present title in 2008 (Royal Navy, 2016). It is important to note, first, that the warriorisation of the Joint Maritime Course coincided with the growing revival of Danish warriorhood. Second, the “warrior” in both Joint Warrior and Valiant Warrior makes a claim to corporateness based on participation in the respective exercise. As such, it excludes non-participants from the “warrior community” of the given exercise. As far as the exercisers are concerned, however, “the warrior” is inclusive across ranks, functions, arms and, in the case of Joint Warrior, across branches and nationalities, too.

An even more inclusive claim to corporateness is found in public culture related to Denmark’s recent military engagements. In 2009, the title of the Danish Armed Forces’ in-house magazine *Krigeren* (“the warrior”), unpublished for years, was adopted by the private internet media Krigeren.dk (2019a). Covering news on Danish defence-related subjects, Krigeren.dk (2019b) has as its stated aim the development of a website in close rapport with current and former servicemembers, military families, and others with an interest in a military lifestyle. In Krigeren.dk’s webstore, one can buy t-shirts with “Kriger” printed on the front. The product description runs as follows: “The t-shirt for veterans, infantrymen, patrol warriors, sandbox warriors, Home Guard warriors, office warriors, everyday warriors, kitchen warriors, air force warriors, naval warriors, YMCA warriors, KFOR warriors ... [insert word] warriors ... 100 percent cotton! 100 percent Warrior!” (Krigeren.dk, 2021). In this context, “warriors”, it seems, are those who identify as such and therefore fashion themselves with the Kriger t-shirt. Using the notion of warrior to grant access to a military lifestyle, Krigeren.dk democratises the “warrior community” and makes an effort at levelling out differences between different arms and different branches, between “grunts” and “POGs,”⁴ and even between civilians and military personnel.

Warrior Face #6: the Passionate and the Tough

“The war machines – for them things couldn’t get wild enough. They were the ones who took pleasure in fighting.” So said Sergeant First Class (1st Sgt) Friis,

4 “Grunt” (*fodtude*): American slang for infantryman or low-ranking personnel in the fighting arms.
“POG”: a shorthand for “person other than grunt.”

one of my ISAF informants, when I conducted a follow-up interview in 2020, some years after he had left the military. Friis seemed to utter his statement with equal parts awe and disbelief. The words concerned those few men that Friis regarded to be “true warriors” (*rigtige krigere*) within the ranks of the Guard Hussar Regiment’s 1st Light Recce Squadron, with whom Friis was deployed to the Siege of Musa Qala in 2006. Hence, “the warrior,” for Friis, is one who shows a liking for war, one who has a passion for fighting (see also Coker, 2007), one who enjoys the adrenaline rush of combat (see also Brænder, 2016). By comparison, Sgt Andersen deployed to Helmand with the 1st Light Recce Squadron when ISAF’s mission was drawing to its close in 2014. Unlike Friis, Andersen was never in combat during his tour, and warfighting is absent from the account of the differences between “soldier” and “warrior” that he gave me a few years back:

Join the Army and by definition one becomes a soldier ... but not all soldiers become warriors, not even all combat soldiers. ... A soldier is an occupation ... the warrior is not ... to be a warrior is to have a specific mindset. You’ll always seek to optimise yourself to be able of performing your best. ... To be a warrior one must go the extra mile ... one must be ready. ... A warrior performs soldiering with dedication, with fighting spirit, and aggression. Soldiering is all the warrior lives for.

Andersen, we can say, speaks of the warrior as something one becomes by virtue of possessing both a self-optimising mindset and a passion for soldiering (see also Coker, 2007). As such, Andersen’s emic understanding of the term partly resonates with the etic notion of warrior that has emerged within military psychology over the past decade – a conception denoting the specific condition of mental toughness. In step with the increasing numbers of veterans struggling with mental health issues, a quest for “the mentally resilient warrior” (Svendsen, 2016) has surfaced: there is, in other words, a growing interest in developing trauma prevention measures in the United States and elsewhere, Denmark included (Defence Command Denmark [DCD] 2014; Hertz, 2015). In fact, striking a responsive chord with the conceptualisation of a “warrior ethos” (Coker, 2007) or a “warrior code” (French, 2017) as a value-based “mental shield” protecting “our troops” against moral injury (W. G., 2020), there are, in a Danish context, those who seem to have found a prescription for “mental resilience” (Møller, 2018) or “mental fitness” (Wenøe & Schwensen, 2020).

Take Lars Møller, a former operator in the Jaeger Corps, a Danish special operations force, as an example. In 2018, Møller published *Think Like a Warrior*:

Your Path to Mental Resilience, a self-help book based on his experiences as an operator, offering advice, hands-on tools, and self-developing assignments on coping with stress and mental challenges. In this context, “warrior” serves as an identity-marker of a mindset that one can achieve through self-development based on “mental resilience” training. One’s warrior is a mental resource to be found within oneself – one has, so to speak, to find one’s “inner warrior” to be mentally resilient in the face of the outer world. This “mental warrior” entails a claim to corporateness celebrating the resourceful, strong individual, while de-warriorising those who fail to become mentally tough, perhaps even in spite of meditation, mindfulness and other “mental resilience” training.

Warrior Face #7: the Virtuous, the Dead, and the Wounded

In 2016, Brigade General Hicks of the U.S. 438th Air Expeditionary Wing awarded the Danish Air Force Corporal Balking and his military working dog Obelix the title “Warriors of the Month.” Obelix was honoured for having an extraordinary nose for security at Forward Operating Base Oqab in Kabul, while Balking was honoured for his outstanding capacity-building efforts (DCD, 2016). In a similar vein, the Reaction Force Company of the Royal Life Guards has recently introduced the “Warrior of the Class” (*holdets kriger*), a title awarded to the highest-achieving private in terms of professionalism, flexibility, cooperation, initiative and coping with stress (Jacobsen, 2020). The “warrior” in the Warrior of the Month and in the Warrior of the Class is an honour bestowed on one from above on the account of one’s exceptional achievements on the ground. A warrior is so designated to serve as an example for others, constituting an ascribed identity-marker of professional status based on virtuous actions. Elaborating on the connection between professionalism and warriorhood, 1st Sgt Friis states:

When one has been blown up a few times, and when one has experienced combat, the warrior becomes one who guards professional integrity ... We had this commander [who had] reflected upon a word that should define us, and he told us it should be “professionalism” because, as he said, “most people are well aware when they are professional.” I embraced that somehow. It’s about doing the right thing. And when no one is looking, too.

This brings us to my anthropological conceptualisation of the warrior. In my research on soldierly becomings (Pedersen, 2017b; 2019a), I conceive what I call the “virtuous warrior” to be an ideal of virtuous self-becoming – an ideal pursued

through one's cultivation of "warrior virtues" such as courage, toughness, and, with Friis in mind, moral integrity (see also Coker, 2007). The "virtuous warrior" entails a self-fashioning struggle for identity embodying virtuous action, be that in the battlespace or on the training ground. However, given that virtuousness is formed in the struggle against our vices, that is, against the excesses and deficiencies of our actions, the "virtuous warrior" contends with constant challenges. This inherent ambiguity of virtue might help explain why we, at least in a Danish context, rarely hear anyone publicly declaring themselves to be a warrior in earnest. As Sgt Andersen stresses, "warrior" is usually not a word one would go about and use about oneself ... It's a term that you may use about others. For instance, you might say, 'he is a great warrior [*stor kriger*]' or 'he is a true warrior' [*rigtig kriger*]. In any event, one has to prove that one is a warrior." Hence, following Andersen, and in accordance with the Warrior of the Month and the Warrior of the Class, we can say that "the warrior" is one recognised as such in the eye of the beholder. "Warrior" is a title one must earn. It is a badge of honour recognising one's extraordinary efforts; one's virtuous actions.

The notion of warrior may also be used to express one's last respects. Thus, Danish troops "killed in action", in accidents, or by their own hand, are occasionally commemorated as warriors by their commanders or by their fellow soldiers. On such occasions, commemorative words in the news, at memorial ceremonies, or at online memorials include phrases such as "All honour to your memory, warrior" (Toft, 2010) and "Thank you for everything, warrior" (Sundsdal, 2013), while Facebook comments bid farewell to the departed with words such as "Rest in peace, warrior" and "See you in Valhalla, warrior." Here, one becomes a "warrior" by virtue of one's violent, war-related death (see also Sørensen, 2017); "warrior" makes up an ascribed identity honouring Danish veterans who lost their lives to war or to its after-effects. "Warrior" tends to be used not merely to show respect for those of "our troops" who paid the "ultimate price," but also to evoke national romantic associations, be that of Viking warriors (*vingekrigere*) who died in battle (*einherjars*) or that of fallen warriors (*faldne krigere*) in the two Schleswig Wars (see also Pedersen 2017b).

To be sure, one may certainly qualify for warriorhood on the grounds of one's war injuries, too. In step with Denmark's military engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq, several organisations have emerged offering support to the growing population of Danish veterans and their families. Most of these organisations have names in which "veterans" or "soldiers" form an integral part. Two, Danish Wounded Warriors (DWW) and the Danish Wounded Warrior Project (DWWP), stand out by drawing upon the deep-rooted trope of *den sårede kriger*: the wounded warrior (see, for example, Baumann, 1865). The DWWP was established by the

Royal Danish Ballet Foundation in 2010. It is a non-profit organisation, which uses Pilates training to help wounded veterans and other survivors of multiple traumas regain a meaningful life (DWWP, 2021). By comparison, the DWW (Veteranskytterne) is a gun club, established in 2014, dedicated to veterans “wounded in action” and their families. The aim of the club is to use shooting and other therapeutic and recreational activities to recover the identity that many injured veterans have lost with their limbs or their military jobs (DWW, 2021). In the case of both DWW and DWWP, “our troops” become “warriors” by virtue of their war injuries, physical and psychological alike. In this sense, “warrior” implies a claim to corporateness based on shared suffering. “Warrior” works as an identity-marker of survival and sacrifice, invoking notions of moral and emotional worth (see Coker, 2007). Importantly, the status of warrior forms a bulwark against the victimisation to which Danish veterans have widely been subjected in public discourse. “Warrior” reclaims a sense not only of military masculinity, but also of “existential potency,” the power of being able to affect the world and reclaim a sense of presence and significance (Pedersen, 2020; see also Jackson, 2013).

Warrior Face #8: the Brutal, the Brave and the Badass

The Angry Staff Officer (2016), an American military blog, argues that warriors are brutal, undisciplined, and chaotic, fighting mainly for their own glory, while soldiers, in contrast, are “disciplined masters of warfare, acting out of a sense of duty and devotion to their homeland, families, or an ideal.” In essence, soldiers are the very antithesis of warriors if we are to concur with the Angry Staff Officer, as 1st Sgt Friis does to a certain extent when he reflects upon what it means to be a warrior in the Danish Army: “In the beginning, before you’re actually a warrior, you’ll have an idea of what a warrior is. It can be produced by brilliant models in both films and computer games, or by some other gung-ho thing.” Here, frenzy and recklessness constitute the defining features of warriorhood.

Moreover, the Danish ISAF troops I have followed did at large *not* deploy to Helmand out of any sense of duty and devotion to either the Danes or the Afghans; at least, there was something else that counted a lot more. As Frederiksen, a first lieutenant back then, bluntly put it shortly prior to his deployment to Helmand: “I don’t care about the Afghans. That’s not why we’re there [in Afghanistan]. We’re there to fight a war. Next time, the war is somewhere else, and then we go there as well.” The ISAF tour was, in a nutshell, about the search for adventure, for action and, ultimately, for combat (Pedersen, 2017a; 2017b; 2019a; 2019c). It was, that is, a search traditionally associated with masculinity (Dawson, 1994; King 2013).

This search, I argue, forming a quest for self-becoming, both as “true warrior”

and as “authentic individual,” is, thereby, a search for glory in terms of being recognised for one’s “warriorhood” and “authentic being” (Pedersen, 2017a; 2017b; see also Coker, 2007). Consequently, many of my informants returned from a relatively uneventful tour of duty with what I call “warrior bodies,” “warrior looks,” and “warrior images,” which apparently served as self-fashioning substitutes for the ultimate but virtually absent “warrior formative” experience of combat.

For its part, the “warrior body” is the result of keeping fit and killing time during deployment with hour upon hour of bodywork going into growing muscles and sculpting oneself in the image of a “Greek god body” (Pedersen, 2017a; 2017b). The para-militarised “warrior look,” on the other hand, is cultivated in particular with the image of battle-seasoned special operations force (SOF) operators, or private security contractors, in mind. It is fashioned through purchasing and wearing non-issued military gear such as 5.11 Tactical flagbearer caps, Mil-Tec shemagh scarfs, Crye Precision combat pants, Salomon light assault boots and specialised Tasmanian Tiger pouches (see also Noordally, 2020). As for the “warrior images,” these are pictures taken of one posing in macho, bravado style with, say, raised assault rifles, or in front of a fully armed Apache Attack Helicopter, while looking very serious. In all three cases, “the warrior,” I contend, is a tacit performance of identity, harbouring a masculinised claim to badassery, to violent potentiality, and thus to existential potency. Such performance of warriorhood may, however, tie into the pursuit of “toxic masculinities,” as 1st Sgt Friis seems to indicate:

There are many wannabe warriors who’ll think that being a warrior is all about being good at getting plastered ... going out beating people up. You see, that’s also a way to climb up the hierarchies ... it may also just be about wearing a pair of cool shoes or deadlifting 250 kg.

By the same token, warriorhood may be used as a measure for guarding access to the centre of military professions. And not least as far as women in the fighting arms are concerned (see also Sløk-Andersen & Persson, this volume). As Private Roskilde confided to me in Camp Bastion, Helmand, in relation to one of her female fellow soldiers within the enlisted ranks of the Danish ISAF force: “The boys are asking her all the time: ‘Why have you become a soldier? You’re not enough of a warrior for that at all. You’re too sweet.’”

Conclusion

Addressing the incipient warriorisation of military professions in post-9/11 Denmark, this chapter has examined military professions and civil-military relations

through an anthropological analysis of the cultural figure of the warrior. In an attempt to draw a multi-perspectival and multifaceted portrait of “the warrior,” I have applied montage as a technique of ethnographic writing. Accordingly, I have presented my empirical material and my analytical reflections in a relatively fragmentary, non-linear fashion with a view to amplifying the invisible in terms of making contradictory and conflicting “gaps” visible between different faces of the warrior. Conceptualising “the warrior” as a question of professional identities, be that in terms of subject formation or self-fashioning, a complex and contested figure, with multiple contextual and situational (and occasionally overlapping) faces, emerges from the montage’s juxtapositions. In this light, “warrior,” I maintain, is a slippery term that must be applied with caution. The notion of warrior demands close and careful attention to its usage in words and deeds, be that by oneself or by others, whether as an emic or etic term, or somewhere in between. “Warrior” is a morally, emotionally, and masculinity-laden notion, opening gaps, or fields of tension, between inclusion and exclusion along lines, such as virtuousness and wickedness, heroism and villainism, sacrifice and self-centredness, bravery and brutality, passion and frenzy, education and experience, competency and potency. In short, insofar as warriors are wanted, the crucial question to ask is not so much “What’s your warrior?” as “How are you a warrior?”

Whose club are you serving? That of “the pack,” or that of “the people”?

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5. The Multidimensional Transformation of the Norwegian Military Profession – From National Duty to Individual Rights

Harald Høiback

Background and Analytical Framework

This volume aims to investigate the ways in which the military profession in the Scandinavian countries has evolved during the last decades following great upheavals in strategic threats and developments in society at large. The main question it seeks to answer is “how has the profession developed to meet these challenges?”

The task of this chapter is to direct that question towards Norway. To what extent has the Norwegian military profession been transformed in the period, and what characterises this transformation?

Naturally, the task of answering this question could be solved in several different ways. The approach I have chosen is comparative. Thus, I first describe the state of the Norwegian military profession in 1995 and 2020, respectively, before drawing comparisons in order to determine what, in fact, has changed, and what has remained the same.

1995 was chosen as a transitional mid-point between two different challenges for the Norwegian military: homeland defence and out-of-area operations. Precisely half-way between the end of the Cold War in 1989 and the beginning of the long War on Terror in 2001, in 1995 the preliminary transformation of the Norwegian Armed Forces had begun, although political and military will to change was still characterised by reluctance and caution. In 1995, also, operations in the Balkans had given a preparatory taste of what was to come within a few years.

While the military threat was regarded as diminished in 1995, Norway remained connected to a recently re-named and territorially reduced Russia along its north-eastern border. While the territorial aspect of Norwegian defence had almost entirely vanished in the early 2000s, in the sense that military services and branches were now trained and equipped for out-of-area operations (Græger, 2016, p. 109), the tide turned after the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014, when Norway began to readjust for territorial defence (Forsvarsdepartementet, 2016).

In addition to this “return of geography,” Norway has recently also fallen victim to cyberattacks. In October 2020, Norway’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ine Eriksen Søreide, openly attributed a cyberattack on the Norwegian parliament to Russia (Fausko et al., 2020). It is not customary to accuse another state of unfriendly behaviour on the internet; the episode demonstrated that the Norwegian Armed Forces of the future should be manned and equipped to meet threats in all dimensions, home and abroad.

To answer the question about the extent and nature of transformation in the Norwegian military, the chapter uses textual analysis as its main methodology. The library at the Norwegian Armed Forces Museums contains a wide range of documents from the seventeenth century to the present, including (among others) formal white papers, regulations, books, articles, flyers, brochures and personal diaries. Consequently, the library provides ample opportunities to paint a rather detailed picture of the Norwegian military profession in 1995 and 2020. The collection’s heterogeneity enables one to look at sources unrestricted to those most politically polished.

The key concept of this undertaking is the concept of “profession.” The term can be defined in several different ways, and I have chosen here to use Samuel Huntington’s classic definition (Huntington, 1957); while it is not entirely flawless, it is well established, particularly in military discourse. The aim here is not to investigate developments in our understanding of the concept of profession, but to investigate changes in the Norwegian Armed Forces. The idea is thus to present two snapshots of the Norwegian military, in 1995 and in 2020 respectively, and then to assess them through the analytical lens of Huntington’s definition of the military profession.

My approach is, therefore, not that of the social scientist, but, rather, that of the historian. The difference is crucial. For a social scientist, the method used in the investigation will determine one's findings. For a historian, the conclusions are the result of a meeting between the historian's perspective and the source material. Two social scientists using the same method to solve the same problem will, ideally, reach the same conclusion. Two historians approaching the same problem, will, ideally, reach two different conclusions – or at least write two different books.

Military Profession – Defined

Published in 1957, Huntington's *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* soon became a classic within the academic field of civil-military relations and the military profession. Arguably, Huntington's book acquired this status more for its pioneering novelty than for its balanced academic disinterestedness and historical thoroughness, and it is important to note that its definition of profession is not universally shared. The reason I use Huntington here is not that his definition cannot be improved, or that it remains the most up-to-date. Far from it; it is on account of its familiarity (Hosar, 2014, p. 394).

For Huntington, there are three “distinguishing characteristics of a profession as a special type of vocation”; these are “its expertise, responsibility, and corporateness.” The expertise of a “professional man is [his] specialized knowledge and skill in a significant field of human endeavour ... acquired only by prolonged education and experience” (Huntington, 1957, p. 8). Professional knowledge has two levels, roughly speaking, one regarding the knowing *how*, the other the knowing *why*.

The professional man's responsibility follows from his not working primarily for profit, or for certain clients, but for society as a whole: “Financial remuneration cannot be the primary aim of the professional man *qua* professional man” (Huntington, 1957, p. 9). Finally, he explains *corporateness* as the feeling of belonging shared by members of a profession in the “consciousness of themselves as a group apart from laymen” (Huntington, 1957, p. 10).

These characteristics are common to all professions such as law and medicine. What is special for the military profession is that the field of expertise in question is the management of violence (Huntington, 1957, p. 11); the profession's specific responsibility is “the military security of his client, society” (Huntington, 1957, p. 15). Professional corporateness, meanwhile, is shown through the fact that “appointments to rank are normally made by the officer corps itself applying general principles established by the state” (Huntington, 1957, p. 17).

In the following sections, I will use Huntington's insights to describe the military profession as it was in Norway in 1995 and 2020, respectively. What overall

image of military expertise, the armed forces' feeling of responsibility, and corporateness do the texts from those two years seem to represent? As will be clear, all three have undergone tremendous transformation.

The Norwegian Military Profession in 1995

In 1995 Norway enjoyed a peacetime force of approximately 34,000, which included 21,000 conscripts. In addition came 12,000 civilian employees. After full mobilisation, the Norwegian Armed Forces would count approximately 255,000 men and women.

The command structure had four main building blocks: the Ministry of Defence (MoD), the Chief of Defence (CHOD), and two operational commanders. At the top of the structure was the Ministry of Defence. It served as the minister's secretariat and, in that capacity, generated security and defence policies and prepared guidelines for the activities of the armed forces. Directly under the MoD was the Chief of Defence and his staff. The CHOD had general command over the entire force and had the daily responsibility for the armed forces' activities. On behalf of the CHOD, four inspector generals, one for each service, conducted training and education while three logistics commands conducted logistics and support. The Commander Allied Forces North Norway (COMNORTH), located in Bodø, and the Commander Allied Forces South Norway (COMSONOR) in Stavanger, had operational command and ran current operations in their respective parts of Norway.

The MoD was in central Oslo, while the Chief of Defence, a four-star general, and his staff were located on the outskirts of Oslo. While the MoD had approximately 200 employees, the CHOD's Defence Staff, which included the four inspector generals stationed in the same HQ, had about 1,000 employees.

In 1995 Norway had no regular Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO). In principle, you were thus either a conscript, serving approximately one year of compulsory service, or an officer. In order to become an officer, however, you had, as a rule, to apply for one of the approximately 15 different Non-Commissioned Officer schools spread around Norway belonging to different services and branches. After a year of basic drill and military leadership training, usually, prospective officers served a compulsory year as a sergeant, usually under some form of supervision. They then either quit the armed forces and went into the mobilisation force as a reservist, or applied for the military academy to become an officer. Those wanting a military career, as a rule, thus had to apply for one of the three military academies.

In 1995, the Army went from two academies to a single institution; from 1996, therefore, each of the three services was served by a single academy. The Home Guard recruited officers mainly from the Army Academy. Education at

the military academy consisted of two stages, each of two years. Notwithstanding some local differences, approximately half of those that took stage one later continued to stage two.

The highest military education was provided by the staff colleges and was also divided into two stages: Staff College I provided basic staff education and lasted approximately three months, while Staff College II lasted for approximately a year. In 1995, the three fighting services' staff colleges were merged into one joint armed forces Command and Staff College.

To summarise: The best-educated officers in Norway in the 1990s had between seven and eight years of education, including one year on-the-job-training as a sergeant. In addition, some cadets also went through civilian university courses while the “top-brass” were sent to foreign military academies.

In 1995, Norwegian women were not obliged to perform ordinary military service. If they applied voluntarily for admission, however, all posts and schools in all branches and on all levels were open to both sexes. In principle, women enjoyed the same terms of service and opportunities for advancement as men (Børresen et al., 2004, p. 357).

While the above is, of course, only an outline of the state of the Norwegian Armed Forces in 1995, it is hopefully enough to form the basis for the next stage of this chapter, where we will look at the nation's military through Huntington's three-dimensional lens.

Expertise

From the latter part of the Cold War into the early 1990s, the Norwegian Armed Forces were one of the biggest in the world relative to the population. In case of a military emergency, Norway could, on paper, mobilise almost 8% of its population (Sunde, 2016, p. 5). The secret behind the huge number was that the standing armed forces, particularly the army, was not a combat-ready force but a big “soldier factory” converting huge numbers of conscripts into a part-time militia. While most able-bodied males in Norway thus had rudimentary military training, the level of competence was modest, at best. As stated by then-retired Major General Martin Vadset in 1995, the armed forces were not particularly worried that the Norwegian soldiers did not “know war” (Græger, 2016, p. 181). The idea was that, if war came, Norwegian stamina, unwelcoming terrain, the country's rough climate and sheer numbers would compensate for any lack of military skill (Ulriksen, 2001, p. 48). And, after all, the Norwegian Armed Forces' task was not to win the war, but to keep ports and airfields open long enough for American reinforcements to arrive.

In 1995, while post-Cold War cutbacks had almost halved the Norwegian mobilisation force, the mechanism remained the same. Military competence was spread rather thinly between a huge number of conscripts and reservists.

In the officer corps, the “proper” military profession, the situation was rather different. A well-educated officer was comparably competent to their civilian professional peers, after education of a similar duration to that enjoyed by priests, lawyers and medical doctors (Hosar 2014, p. 396–399). Military instruction was, however, not part of the national education system, and courses from military schools had no comparability in the standards of higher-education qualifications; courses were not measured, for instance, by the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) or the Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (CATS) along the same lines as civilian courses.

In 1995, some attempts were made to afford parts of military education, at least, civilian recognition, in the sense that diplomas from the military academies could be used as building blocks for a civilian degree. It took, however, nearly ten years before this was accomplished, as we see below.

There were many downsides of not belonging to a recognised meriting system (Forsvarsdepartementet, 2001). You were not, for instance, formally qualified to become a teacher in high school even though you may have had 15 years of relevant experience in educating 19-year-old conscripts, and even, perhaps, a formal education twice as long the other teachers at the school. Your military diploma was not acknowledged in the civilian world.

The upside of not belonging to a recognised meriting system, however, was that the armed forces were free to emphasise topics and traits relevant for the military profession. Physical ability and endurance, strength of character, loyalty and sociability could thus be important aspects of military education, concerns completely irrelevant, if not anathema, to a civilian university campus: for Samuel Huntington, indeed, “the virtues of West Point have been America’s vices, and the vices of the military, America’s virtues” (Huntington, 1957, p. 466).

All veterans from the Second World War were retired by 1995, and service overseas in UN-led operations such as those in the Middle East was not regarded as particularly militarily relevant. This meant that no one had any combat experience to speak of (Laugen, 2009, p. 48). Professional merits were mainly earned through long and hard military exercises, and through several postings to desolate places, particularly in the northernmost parts of Norway.

To summarise: in 1995, Norwegian military competence was very unevenly distributed; in the lower echelons (outside the profession, so to speak), it was scarce and rudimentary. Higher in the hierarchy, military professionals were relatively well-educated, both compared to their civilian peers and to their military

peers in other NATO-countries. This competence was not particularly “bookish” in nature, but practical. Simply put, in 1995 the Norwegian Armed Forces consisted of a huge number of military amateurs, led by well educated, if somewhat practically minded, officers.

Responsibility

If the Norwegian Armed Forces were a rather frail giant, its head, the Chief of Defence and his staff, were both influential and outspoken. This was a legacy from 1940, when the military had been badly prepared for the German attack. To ensure that nothing similar would happen again, the Chief of Defence was empowered to speak his mind publicly, in order to help prevent political neglect of the military.

After 1945 we might envision Norwegian society as resting on two equally important pillars, one political and one military. The fundament of the political pillar was the ballot box and universal voting rights. On top was the king, as the formal figurehead of the government. The fundament of the military pillar was basic military training, and compulsory service for all male citizens. The king sat atop this pillar, too, as a four-star general and the formal figurehead of the armed forces.

Of course, the politicians decided the size and funding of the forces. That these two pillars were rather independent of each other is, however, indicated by a royal decree from 10 June 1949: “Directives for officers, non-commissioned officers and military chiefs in case of an armed attack on Norway.” According to this directive “an armed attack is to be regarded as an order for complete and immediate mobilisation all over the country if the King (Government) is rendered powerless by the enemy. Orders to discontinue mobilisation issued in the name of the Government are to be considered false.” Furthermore: “Officers and NCOs are to follow these basic principles when planning and conducting the defence of the country:

a) They shall at once offer resistance against an armed attack with all resources at their disposal, and in the shortest possible time put all their efforts into the defence effort; b) They are to offer resistance even if they are left on their own and even if the situation looks difficult or hopeless without regard to enemy threat of reprisals (bombing of towns, etc.), and c) They shall continue to fight regardless of orders issued in the name of the King (Government) or other superior authority if the latter are taken prisoner or in some other way are rendered inoperative” (Royal Decree, 10 June 1949).

In rather blunt language, this decree shows that the armed forces’ responsibility in case of war was immense (Royal Decree, 1949). As Thomas Schelling

(1966, p. 50) stated: “Many governments have had constitutional or informal provisions for increasing the authority of the armed forces in time of emergency, thus possibly shifting government authority in the direction of individuals and organisations whose motives to resist were less doubtful.”

Great responsibility rested even on reservists and individuals of low rank. In peacetime, tens of thousands of Norwegian reservists had their service weapons stored at home, with ample ammunition to go with them. The government thus had to trust that they did not sell, lose, or use their service arms criminally or foolishly.

To conclude, in 1995 ordinary people, in the shape of part time soldiers, had a personal stake in the defence of Norway in the sense that they had their weapons stored at home, and they were supposed to defend the nation without waiting for orders to do so.

Corporateness

After completing their basic military training at a young age, most conscripts would return to civilian life, while also regularly being called in for some military training and rudimentary supplementary education until they were 44 years old.

As a result, the military “corporation” in Norway was huge indeed. All able-bodied men, apart from some conscientious objectors who spent their 18 months of compulsory service in places like nursing homes and kindergartens, were members of the corporation. Norway was quite literally constituted by (male) citizens in arms.

To illustrate the point, the Norwegian term “yrkesoffiser” is illuminating. The closest English translation is “professional officer,” but the connotations are very different. In English, the term “professional officer” connotes someone competent and highly skilled. “Yrkesoffiser,” on the other hand, denotes a person that stayed on in the armed forces, for whatever reason, while all his peers from boot camp went on to lead civilian lives. And everyone knew that if war came and the government was obligated to mobilise the entire force, the bedrock of that force would not be the yrkesoffiserer, but bankers, teachers, lawyers and drivers, called in from wider society to defend the nation (Ulriksen, 2002, p. 241).

1995 Summarised

In 1995, the Norwegian Armed Forces were a huge organisation touching civilian society in many ways. Almost everyone had served in the armed forces, or had close relations to people who had personal experience from the military. Many also knew that if war came, they would be called up to fight or would have to

support the war effort through civilian support to the armed forces, the so-called “total defence,” which, in addition to civil defence, also included economic, social, psychological, and later digital, measures to enhance national resilience.

Military expertise was spread thinly, and responsibility rested rather heavily on individuals in the military hierarchy. If the mobilisation bell rang, you had to spring into action, regardless of whether you were told to do so by a superior or not. The feeling of military corporateness was thus not restricted to the professionals, but was strongly and visibly integrated into the national character.

This picture of the Norwegian Armed Forces as “the big friendly giant” has changed, and dramatically so, in the last 25 years, due to three game-changing initiatives. The first was top-down, politically driven and inspired by New Public Management; the next bottom-up, and driven by experiences from the field in Afghanistan; and the last was outside-in and driven by what I, following Murray (2019), understand as the new identity politics.

The Norwegian Military Profession in 2020

By 2020, Norway’s peacetime force was down to approximately 19,000 men and women, 7,000 of whom were conscripts; some 4,000 were civilian employees. It continues to have four main services, the Army, the Air Force, the Navy and the Home Guard; Cyber Defence and Special Operations have been established as equal pillars, albeit without their own academies and uniforms.

Since 1995, the mobilisation force has for all practical purposes been discarded. To put it bluntly, what you get in a time of war is what you see in peace. The Home Guard still has reservists principally tasked with defending vital points in their own region in case of a surprise attack or other crises, but the manoeuvre elements are basically what they are, without any reservists to augment or sustain them. The Norwegian Armed Forces are today, therefore, a rapid reaction force (“innsatsforsvar”), not a homeland defence force (“mobiliseringsforsvar”) as in 1995.

Similarly, there have been alterations in the command organisation since 1995. While the MoD is still at the top, in 2003 the Chief of Defence lost his own staff and headquarters and is now physically placed in the same building and corridor as the Minister of Defence (Bogen & Håkenstad, 2015). The four inspector generals have been re-allocated to different parts of Norway.

The daily business of the military is now run by the Defence staff located in the same quarters as the MoD. In his or her capacity as the minister’s main military advisor, CHOD has now to pull human resources from the same pool of clerks as the minister. In 2009, the parliamentary defence committee was also merged with the committee for foreign affairs.

In 1995, operations and major exercises were led by two regional headquarters, one in the south and one in the north. In 2009, the southern headquarters were closed, leaving all operations in Norway and abroad led from Norwegian Joint Headquarters in the northern municipality of Bodø.

The military educational system in Norway has also seen great upheaval. In 2005, the three academies and the joint staff college became accredited parts of the national educational system. While the military schools are organisationally still part of the military, they now issue bachelor's and master's degrees. In 2018, the entire educational chain across the services was separated from their mother services, and merged into one military college under one commander and dean, but still located in different parts in Norway.

The Non-Commissioned Officer schools, previously the principal gateway for those wanting to become officers, were disbanded in the 2018 reforms. By 2020, there were two main gateways to a military career: applying for a three year bachelor education at one of the three academies, finally graduating as an officer, or serving as an enlisted soldier for a year and then applying for a post as a non-commissioned officer or enlisted personnel making up the "other ranks" (OR).

Until 2015, Norway was the only member of NATO without proper NCOs and other ranks (that is, military personnel who are neither officers nor commissioned officers). That year, the Norwegian Parliament decided to establish a corps of specialists and NCOs before 2020 (Endringer i forsvarspersonelloven m.m., 2015). After the implementation of the new system, 70% of all military employees will be OR and 30% officers (OF). Parliament also decided that, from 2015, military service was to be compulsory for women, too (Endringer i vernepliktsloven, 2014). This decision did not arise from military necessity, but from pressure from the youth wings of the national parties prompting their parliamentary mother parties to vote for universal compulsory service as a matter of principle and gender equality. As the parliamentarian Snorre Valen stated in Parliament in June 2013: "This political victory, endorsed by Parliament today, is first and foremost a victory for the youth and the conscripts. It was they who forced it through" (Valen, 2013).

It is of course tempting to see compulsory service for women in the light of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (S/RES/1325) on women, peace and security of 2000 (UN Security Council, 2000). Snorre Valen (2013) even refers to the resolution in his speech to parliament mentioned above. To prove the connection, however, further explanation is required as to why Norway is the only Western state to take this step; although related to the same questions of equality and security, the correlation between Resolution 1325 and compulsory service for women in Norway should be considered spurious.

Next, we will consider the Norwegian Armed Forces of 2020 through Huntington's three-dimensional lens.

Expertise

In 1995, a colonel in the armed forces was just as well educated as his civilian peers in terms of the duration of his training, and was considerably better educated and more experienced than a captain or a sergeant. If this is still the case today, it will not remain so for long.

Today, a colonel – that is, an officer who joined the armed forces in the late 1980s and early 1990s – has received, as a rule, between seven and eight years of formal education. The colonels of 2050 – that is, future officers starting their career today – will have received some four years of formal education. In other words, the officers' civilian peers in the future will not be lawyers or medical doctors, but nurses and schoolteachers.

Moreover, the colonel of today is not necessarily more experienced than his younger colleagues. In clear contrast to the force of 1995, validation is now earned in operations overseas. Many young and mid-level officers have thus notably more real military experience than their bosses. There are, of course, individual differences, as there are Norwegian colonels and generals with numerous deployments and substantial combat experience. The bigger picture is, however, that the military leadership has become, or will become, considerably less well educated than their predecessors. In effect, if the Norwegian Armed Forces of 1995 were composed of numerous, if militarily callow, soldiers led by practically-minded and reasonably well-educated officers, it is now almost the other way around. Competence and credibility are no longer, or at least not to the same extent as they were in 1995, to be found in the biggest corner office.

That the military educational system came under the auspices of the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT), was, on paper, a good thing. Every ambitious educational system needs external reference points and impulses in order to improve and stay relevant in a rapidly changed world. With the use of an external measuring rod, however, arrives the danger that the curriculum should be developed to fit the apparatus of assessment rather than to create better products for the customer – in this particular case, operational military chiefs. So, in addition to having only half the formal school education as previous generations of military leaders, more time is filled with somewhat irrelevant topics in order to satisfy the measuring system. This is not a particularly new concern: “Courage, resolution, and the ability to keep one's head are not attributes that may be acquired by sitting behind a university desk, plowing through reading lists and writing papers” (van Creveld, 1990, p. 77).

It does not have to be this way, of course. The military's need for competence may still be the guiding star, and external evaluations might be important means to ensure the quality of the research and education leading to that competence – but I sense a potential vicious circle here. As the quality of military expertise is reduced, a natural result of cutting time spent in school by half, officers' ability to formulate militarily coherent educational requirements may be reduced with it. The result, as shown in Norway, is that military needs come to rely on the ability of the civilian educational staff to formulate such requirements. As the former commandant of the college Major general Rolf Thomsen (2012) stated: “Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies (IFS) played an important role in working out the application for the accreditation.” The reason was simple: “IFS knows education” (Thomsen, 2012). While Thomsen was head of a military school established in 1817 and the civilian IFS had never previously been responsible for education, it was, nonetheless, the IFS that formulated the new program – and, unsurprisingly, ended up with many slots that only they could fill in the curriculum. What IFS thought that the military students needed most were topics that only IFS could provide. In other words, the tail wagged the dog.

It is no longer the commander's need for expertise that sets the pace; it is the academic's need for a research outlet. As stated by the previous commander at the Staff College, Brigadier General Tor Arnt Sandli (2012): “The model became the pretext for a larger Norwegian Institute for defence studies, but is not for the best of the Armed forces.” The military profession becomes less and less military as it gradually becomes a paler and weaker version of civilian education.

Responsibility

NATO's operations in Kosovo in 1999 were a wake-up call for Norwegian politicians. Notwithstanding the still-considerable size of the Norwegian Armed Forces, it had been hard to find anything or anyone to send to the Balkans.

The Army's Immediate Reaction Force, the Telemark Battalion, was, for instance, not quite as immediate as its name might suggest. When the Kosovo Force Commander, General Sir Mike Jackson, was told when the Norwegians would arrive in the theatre, he asked: “What's taking so long? Are they walking?” (Egeberg, 2017, p. 143). Furthermore, the Norwegian F-16s had limited ability to operate during darkness and to hit targets on the ground. Many found those shortcomings somewhat worrying given Norway's border with NATO's traditional main antagonist. As the Minister of Defence in 1999, Dag Jostein Fjærvoll later said: “It came as a big surprise. I could not believe it” (Egeberg, 2017, p. 98). Had the entire force been a charade or a Potemkin village during all those years during

the Cold War? The fallout of these unpleasant discoveries was earth-shattering for the way the Norwegian Armed Forces was led.

Armed with, among other things, principles from Thatcherism and New Public Management (NPM), the government decided to abandon the General Staff and place the Chief of Defence in the Ministry of Defence. Different parts of the military had to buy services from each other, and the politicians did not trust the CHOD enough to let him run his own business.

This move de-militarised the upper echelon of the military, rendering it, today, one of many subfields in the governmental administration. The CHOD can no longer develop coherent military advice without using politically sensitive staffers. The same people working for the Minister work for the CHOD, and it is humanly impossible to say something to one of them without thinking of the reaction of the other. This forms a clear contrast to most other governmental areas in Norway, which are usually governed through a directorate physically and organisationally separated from the relevant ministry. In the military case, the directorate is part of the ministry. It is, to put it metaphorically, like playing chess with yourself; the situation gives rise to a real danger that CHOD is reduced to a political mouthpiece rather than the hard-hitting sparring partner envisaged in Eliot Cohen's ideal of an unequal dialogue in which "both sides expressed their views bluntly, indeed, sometimes offensively, and not once but repeatedly" (Cohen, 2002, p. 209). It is worth mentioning, however, that there are signs that this integrated model is under reconsideration.

Eight years under Boris Yeltsin in the 1990s, meanwhile, had seen Russia become a very pale shadow of its former Soviet self. It had become very difficult to consider the experience of 9 April – the day in 1940 that Nazi Germany unexpectedly attacked Norway – still relevant. In the future, the use of Norwegian military forces should be something decided by normal political procedures, not by a decision made by generals in the dead of night, and backed by the Royal Decree of 10 June 1949.

Since wars were tending to move further and further away from Norwegian shores, parliament also decided to merge the foreign and military affairs committees. The use of military force was now part of foreign policy, no longer a matter of homeland defence or national survival. Those were yesterday's worries.

As a result, in Huntingtonian terms, the military profession's responsibility for Norway's security has gone from very great to genuinely negligible. If the Royal Decree of 10 June 1949 has not been formally discarded, the document's import is dormant. In 2013, for instance, a previous Chief of Defence, General Sverre Diesen, stated unambiguously: "The CHOD does not work for Parliament, nor for the media, but for the government" (Diesen, 2013). To modern ears

that sounds like common sense knowledge of civil-military relations, and in line with Huntington's principle of objective civilian control:

When the military man receives a legal order from an authorized superior, he does not argue, he does not hesitate, he does not substitute his own views; he obeys instantly. He is judged not by the policies he implements, but rather by the promptness and efficiency with which he carries them out. His goal is to perfect an instrument of obedience: the uses to which that instrument is put are beyond his responsibility. His highest virtue is instrumental not ultimate. (Huntington, 1957, p. 73)

This message is miles away from the Norwegian experience of April 1940. Here the completely unprepared government, instantly shaky, began to send mixed signals in all directions. At Midtskogen on 10 April 1940, the day after the attack, the officer in charge even refused to follow a direct order from the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Ruge, 1989, p. 20). The lessons learned from this we have already encountered. The politicians knew through bitter experience that they may become shaky again and stated in the Decree (Royal Decree, 10 June 1949): "Orders to discontinue mobilisation issued in the name of the government are to be considered false."

Presumably, all previous chiefs of defence, up until Sverre Diesen who took the helm in 2005, would have accepted that while it is indeed politicians who have the final word, there may come a situation where the nation's interests are best served by *not* listening to the politicians. As, for instance, Colonel Birger Eriksen did when he decided to skip the mandatory warning shot and engaged the unknown battlecruiser that approached his position in April 1940 (Høiback, 2003).

Politicians have the right to be wrong, but not the right to fumble away the nation's sovereignty and constitution. This point was elegantly pinned down by General Douglas MacArthur in his address to the Massachusetts Legislature in July 1951:

I find in existence a new and heretofore unknown and dangerous concept that the members of our armed forces owe primary allegiance or loyalty to those who temporarily exercise the authority of the Executive Branch of Government rather than to the country and its Constitution which they are sworn to defend. No proposition could be more dangerous (Lebow, 1981, p. 289).

You could agree or disagree with MacArthur, of course, but there will always be a potential tension between politicians' desire for re-election and the often-pa-

rochial military views. A younger colleague of MacArthur, General Maxwell D. Taylor, also put his finger on the challenge: “Taylor disapproved of the president’s expectation that military officers mould their advice to the views and feelings of superiors and accept public responsibility for policy decisions that they opposed” (McMaster 1997, p. 12).

Thoughts like these are beyond the pale in Norway today. Norwegian generals are, in line with Huntington’s message, expected to be ambassadors for the government’s policy, unless, of course, they are close to retirement, and can speak their mind without fear of retribution. The security of the state is not the generals’ responsibility anymore; it is the government’s. Today, Norwegian generals would thus follow General John McConnell’s assurance to Lyndon B. Johnson: “The general assured the president that, even if he did not have faith in the administration’s policies, he ‘would still go ahead and carry out his decisions to the best of my ability, and I would see, also, to it that the entire Air Force did the same’.” (McMaster 1997, p. 223).

If the generals have lost their old feeling of professional responsibility for the nation’s security, something similar happened to the lowest ranks. In 2002, the government decided that reservists should no longer store their military weapons at home, or, if they did, the weapons should be made unserviceable by the removal of vital parts or the use of a lock (Heimevernet, 2014). The key or the vital part should not be in the soldiers’ possession, but should be stored separately higher up in the chain of command. The government did not trust the National Guard with functional weapons in peacetime anymore. Or, rather, the military threat to Norway was considered so low that they did not need to trust them any longer. Even at the lowest level, for the conscripts, their sense of responsibility has changed considerably.

All new recruits are issued a handbook that explains all the minute details of military life, including something about responsibility. In the version handed out to the recruits in 1995, written in 1987, we can for instance read that combat is very difficult, and that we have to cooperate in order to succeed: “We have to be cunning and often do without instructions. We have to follow orders swiftly, and just as important is the leader’s and the individual’s ability to act without orders, if need be.” (Forsvarets Overkommando 1987, p. 146).

In the current handbook, issued in 2015, the message is very different: “For a soldier it is important to show courage, and not only in combat. Everything presented so far is about such courage. Most important of all is the courage to speak out loud if something is wrong – whether it is about bullying, sexual harassment, unjustness, or situations where one can be exposed to great danger” (Soldathåndboken, 2015, p. 109). This mindset is very far from that of 1987. The kind of courage

asked for in 2015 is more relevant to a high school or a summer camp than to a fighting force that may be exposed to great danger indeed as a matter of course.

Corporateness

Regarding the feeling of corporateness, three important things have happened since 1995. The number of conscripts is reduced, a corps of specialists and NCOs has been established and identity as merit has been reintroduced.

In 1995, approximately two thirds of every cohort of Norwegian men did compulsory military service. In 2020, that number was down to approximately 13%, of which 75% were men and 25% were women (Nilssen, 2019). In the near future, most households in Norway will thus not include someone with personal stories to tell from the military, in clear contrast to the situation in 1995. The odds of a future Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Defence, or members of the relevant parliamentary committees having personal experience from the armed forces is in steep decline. The same goes for journalists and pundits. While it is of course too early to tell what the consequences of this will be in the long term, it will evidently reduce the almost all-embracing feeling of military corporateness in Norway.

The second change in corporateness is connected to the NCOs. In 1995 Norway did not have NCOs in the ordinary sense; the Norwegian military was more egalitarian than most Western militaries in that nearly all full-time military employees were officers. Arguably, this reflects the fact that the distinction between blue collar and white collar workers in Norway also rather blurred, generally speaking. In Norway, blue collar workers are relatively well paid while the professions command relatively modest salaries compared to other Western countries. Consequently, it is not cost-effective to hire employees for the performance of simple tasks alone. The same goes for the military. It is better to hire one person capable of performing both rather sophisticated and rather simple tasks rather than to hire one person for the sophisticated tasks and another for the simple tasks; this is simply too expensive.

Since Norway is a very egalitarian society, it has twice rejected a two-tier officer corps, once in 1930 and again in the mid-seventies. A symptomatic example of the way Norwegian egalitarianism influences the military is the debate caused by the new NCOs regarding who is required to salute who. In the USA and the UK it is obvious that a sergeant salutes a lieutenant, regardless of age and experience. In Norway this is not obvious at all. It feels strange that a 48-year-old sergeant should salute a 22-year-young second lieutenant.

We can attribute Norway's attempt to yet again resist certain previously inviolable customs to all those years spent in Afghanistan. The country's participation

in Afghanistan was not principally down to the Taliban, nor on behalf of the Afghan people. It was for the sake of our partners in NATO, and the United States in particular. We were not there primarily to solve other people's troubles, but our own – namely, how to stay relevant and how to ensure that future U.S. Presidents will continue to desire to support Norway (The Norwegian Commission on Afghanistan 2016, p. 8). And in order to look good, what was better than looking similar to the Americans?

The compartmentalisation of military employees in Norway into two groups not only splits the military profession in two, but it also reduces it in size by 70% – at least according to Huntington. Enlisted personnel are not part of the profession:

The enlisted men subordinate to the officer corps are a part of the organizational bureaucracy but not of the professional bureaucracy. The enlisted personnel have neither the intellectual skills nor the professional responsibility of the officer. They are specialists in the application of violence not the management of violence. Their vocation is a trade not a profession. This fundamental difference between the officer corps and the enlisted corps is reflected in the sharp line which is universally drawn between the two in all the military forces of the world (Huntington, 1957, p. 17).

The third substantial change in the corporateness is not related to numbers, either of conscripts or officers, but cuts to the very bone of professionalism. As stated by Huntington:

Professional competence and the professional spirit reached their fullest development in Prussia. ... The central importance of the military schools and the key role of the General Staff gave the Prussian Army an intellectual overcurrent absent from other forces. As one English observer [Lascelles Wraxall] commented sadly in 1859: "The fact that education is the be-all and end-all of the Prussian officer, is a potent lever in causing him to perfect himself in his profession; and the certainty of promotion through merit and not from caprice, sets the whole of the Prussian officers far above those whom we find in the English army." (Huntington, 1957, p. 53).

Of course, 50% of the Prussian population, the women, did not qualify, regardless of their skills and ability. That is in principle, the same today. Some members of society, among them convicts, foreigners, and disabled people, do not qualify

for membership in the military profession regardless of their competence. What is significant of Prussia was thus not that any member of Prussian society could become an officer, but that all those who *could* be officers could also (in principle) rise to a top position, based solely (in principle) on skills and competence.

The principle that your *skills* are more important than who you *are* when it comes to promotion, of course, applied similarly to the Norwegian Armed Forces until quite recently. Now, even the military profession in Norway has become victim to a global megatrend. As described by the British journalist Douglas Murray:

“Identity politics,” meanwhile, has become the place where social justice finds its caucuses. It atomizes society into different interest groups according to sex (or gender), race, sexual preference and more. It presumes that such characteristics are the main, or only, relevant attributes of their holders and that they bring with them some added bonus. For example (as the American writer Coleman Hughes has put it), the assumption that there is “a heightened moral knowledge” that comes with being black or female or gay. It is the cause of the propensity of people to start questions or statements with “Speaking as a ...” (Murray, 2019, p. 3).

At the time of writing, the most important interest group in military matters in Norway is that related to gender.

Some would perhaps say that at this juncture the reason for introducing gender quotas and compulsory service for women in Norway is not connected to identity, but to skillset. By bringing both sexes into the military in full force, the armed forces will acquire a broader spectrum of competencies. Such an impression is, however, a fallacy.

As stated by Fine, Joel and Rippon: “In most measures of brain and behaviour, the differences between human males and females are much smaller than the difference in height” (Fine, Joel & Rippon, 2019). In other words, gender is not the dominant factor in determining emotional and cognitive reasoning. That is, the differences are larger within the biological sexes than between the (average) male and female. So, if you want to recruit someone with a particular skillset connected to brain and behaviour, you have to select specifically on those qualities. To select on gender will not be particularly more relevant than selecting on the colour of the hair. This is, of course, not the case when it comes to physical abilities. Strength and endurance are, in clear contrast to brain and behaviour, significantly correlated to gender. If that were not the case, there would be no point in having separate competitions for men and women in sports.

The question of women in combat roles is not the issue here. People like General Jim Mattis and former Vice President Dick Cheney, none of them particularly “lefties” or famously feminist, recognise that women can do a superb job on the battlefield. As Mattis stated:

In the spirit of keeping our American experiment alive, it will be enough if this book conveys my respect for those men and women who selflessly commit to serving our country—soldiers, sailors, airmen, Coast Guardsmen, and Marines, united in their devotion to our survival as a nation. In the toughest circumstances, they earned my undying respect and admiration. Alongside them I’d do it all again. (Mattis & West, 2019, p. 270)

Whether you are a man or a woman, black or white, is completely beside the point, as long as you fill the requirements and are professional in what you are doing. No shortcuts offered: “A good map-reading lieutenant is worthless if he can’t do pull-ups” (Mattis & West 2019, p. 2).

Dick Cheney noted the same, especially when he pinned the Silver Star on specialist Monica Brown in 2007. She had been in a convoy in Afghanistan when a vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device and the unit was attacked by small arms fire. As one of the injured soldiers, Specialist Jack Bodami later testified: “To say she handled herself well would be an understatement. It was amazing to see her keep completely calm and take care of our guys with all that going on around her. Of all the medics we’ve had with us throughout the year, she was the one I trusted the most.” (Cheney & Cheney, 2011, p. 96). Paradoxically, the army transferred her to another unit after the incident, because regulations prohibited women from participating in combat missions. This was a wakeup call for Cheney:

As a secretary of defense and as vice president, I had supported the ban on women in combat units. Increasingly, though, soldiers like Monica Brown find themselves on the front lines, and her heroism made me think our policy ought to be adjusted. It needs to reflect the changing nature of twenty-first-century war, in which combat and noncombat, frontline and rear, are not always so easy to delineate (Cheney & Cheney, 2011, p. 497).

It is not only people like Mattis and Cheney who have noticed this. If you know your trade, people don’t much care who you are: “Under the intensified profes-

sionalism of the twenty-first century, performance, not social background, has become primary. Soldiers have developed solidarities with each other through the competent performance of their mutually allotted tasks, out of which they build up dense networks of trust” (King 2019, p. 148).

When the government in Norway states that at least 30% of all students at the military schools should be women (Setter mål om 30 prosent kvinner, 2019), they are thus, in my mind, undermining this network of trust. Most students gain their position through their skills and competent performance alone; others gain theirs primarily through who they are. That is problematic, to say the least:

So here is the first conundrum of the current presumption on the position of women as opposed to men in our societies. Women are exactly the same as men – as capable, as able, as suited to the same array of tasks. And also better. Exactly how this is the case is ill defined because it is ill thought through. Nevertheless we have decided to embed precisely such ill-thinking as deep into our societies as we can possibly manage (Murray, 2019, p. 81).

Norway’s first female flag officer, Vice Admiral Louise Dedichen, takes this logic even further, and states that leaders should be judged on how many women they employ (Holmes, 2019). To outshine your rival for your next promotion, you thus have to appoint even more women than she does. To put it bluntly, the sky is the limit – or, rather, 100% is the limit. If there is, as Madeleine Albright tells us, a special place in hell for women who don’t help each other, the military profession as we know it is gone. Or, correctly speaking, we are back where we started. Instead of an armed force composed of men alone, we have an armed force composed only of women.

I have, obviously, pushed the argument as far as it goes here. Not even Vice Admiral Dedichen would, presumably, prefer an armed force made up of one single gender. The point is, however, to show how slanted the rhetoric has become. To be of a specific gender has become a quality of its own.

2020 Summarised

If the Norwegian Armed Forces of 1995 were big, “folksy” and perhaps slightly inept, much had changed by 2020.

In 2020, a rather large share enjoyed personal combat experience, and even more had experience from overseas operations in different capacities. Many had had a taste of what the armed forces are really for. The formal education, on the

other hand, was cut in half. Despite the more complex security situation in Europe after the Russo-Georgia war in 2008, the Russian annexation of Crimea and the Russo-Ukrainian War in 2014, and despite the constant urge from NATO to increase the national defence expenditure to 2% of GDP (NATO, 2014), Norway nearly halved its investment in formal military education. Expertise was thus depressed. Today, and going forward, the lowest ranks are smarter and more experienced than before while the brass are likely to have received significantly less education.

Regarding responsibility, both the generals and the unskilled soldiers were put under administration, so to speak. The CHOD is surrounded by civil servants working for the minister of the day, and the grunts can no longer defend their country without first asking someone for the key to their own gun.

Regarding the feeling of corporateness, the armed forces have first been split in two, with 70% now falling outside the profession. Then it is split again, this time between those who were commissioned according to their competency and those who primarily commissioned because of who they are. This does not mean, of course, that women are militarily incompetent. Far from it. It means that their professional competency is not regarded as solid enough to be measured on its own merit and, therefore, we need quotas.

This may of course seem like a radical conclusion, even provocative to some. But it is, in my mind, impossible to understand the transformations of the Norwegian Armed Forces over the last 25 years without considering how they have become an important arena for gender politics.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have seen how the Norwegian Armed Forces have changed almost beyond recognition over the last 25 years.

The most important backdrop for the changes was the disappearance of the Soviet Union in the early nineties. Gradually it became apparent that Norway would never again suffer a surprise military attack. The armed forces could therefore be governed like any other sector in the administration, but on a much shorter leash. Unlike, say, the police, the National Health Service and transportation, there is no separation between the political sphere and the daily running of the military. Based on the politicians' experience of the lack of military preparedness in the late '90s, the government does not trust the armed forces with anything but a very tight leash (Høiback, 2020).

Since Norway has not been particularly afraid of fighting a major war for

some time, the social imperative now has the upper hand to the extent that the functional imperative has little leverage left: “The military institutions of any society are shaped by two forces: a functional imperative stemming from the threats to the society’s security and a societal imperative arising from the social forces, ideologies, and institutions dominant within the society” (Huntington, 1957, p. 2). If we believe society to be virtually unthreatened, the functional imperative is very weak indeed. This effect became most conspicuous in Norway when parliament surprisingly decided that military service should be mandatory for women as well as for men. It was surprising because the military needed very few conscripts, and all military jobs were already open for women. The recruitment of conscripts was not a problem. Norway was also alone in our part of the world to make such a step, where most had discarded compulsory service all together.

While the social forces reigned almost supreme in the capital and the national discourse, the situation was almost completely reversed in the barracks and garrisons scattered around Norway. There, battle-proven veterans knew from personal experience how dangerous compromises and political correctness can be in battle.

If the upper echelons were demilitarised, so to speak, the lower echelons were militarised, and even Americanised, in a sense not seen since the Second World War. It all happened, of course, in Afghanistan where Norwegian troops frequently participated in combat and operations resembling war. A whole new breed of young officers returned home with completely different stories to tell to those of their older peers. The professionalism, the gravity and seriousness among the lower levels increased significantly. Not in the sense that the tone became more sombre, or the jokes more *salonfähig*, but because the education and training became far more deliberate and realistic.

Since the fear of the big war has gone, or has at least been reduced considerably, while the small war on the model of Afghanistan and Libya is very much present, military discourse in Norway has become confused. The force of the societal imperative from above, and the functional imperative from below, became so strong that the Norwegian Armed Forces snapped in two, with the new NCO-corps as a rather peculiar result. One would be excused for thinking that the new Other Ranks-corps are made up of warriors, while the ranks of officers are composed of politically-conscious military bureaucrats. However, the societal imperative cuts across the OFs and ORs as well.

Some would perhaps claim that changes have been so profound since 1957 that Huntington’s definition of the military profession is no longer valid. But, as warned in the introduction, the aim here has not been to investigate developments in our understanding of the concept of “profession,” but to investigate

changes in the Norwegian Armed Forces. To that purpose, Huntington's definition has functioned well as a vehicle to see us through this chapter. Whether the vehicle itself needs adjustment or replacement has not been the issue.¹

Whether or not we have lost something important since 1995 is a question of individual perspective. Some things have improved; others have not. None of this needs to worry us much as long as there is no threat of our sovereignty becoming the stakes in the big war. And that is a good thing indeed. But *if* Norway should again be forced to defend its own territory, I personally think we are in big trouble. I leave the vindication to Jim Mattis:

Our military exists to deter wars and to win when we fight. We are not a petri dish for social experiments. No one is exempt from studying warfighting and lethality as the dominant metric, and nothing that decreases the lethality of our forces should be forced on a military that will go into harm's way. I have seen no case where weakness promotes the chance for peace (Mattis and West, 2019, p. 236).

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1 For those reading Norwegian, I would recommend my own article "Det omvendte militærkupp – en studie av militærprofesjonens vekst og fall," *Nytt Norsk Tidsskrift*, 01/2020 (Volum 37), where I argue that officers no longer constitute a profession in Norway.

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6. Mastering Both: The Planned and the Unforeseen An Epistemological Investigation of Swedish Military Professionalism

Lotta Victor Tillberg

The Swedish Armed Forces – Today and in the Future

The primary purpose and responsibility of the Swedish Armed Forces (SAF) is formulated in its mission statement: “Swedish sovereignty, rights, interests and our fundamental values shall be protected. Our security policy aims at preserving our freedom of action and defending against political, military or any other kind of pressure” (Government Offices of Sweden, 2015). For the armed forces, this involves deterring and, in a worst-case scenario, responding to, military attacks against Sweden of all kinds. Today, these responsibilities are not limited to operations within the nation’s borders since, in recent decades, international missions have formed a central part of the SAF’s activities.

In line with other European countries, the SAF endorse the fact that a traditional understanding of war, with an exclusive focus on borders and territory, is no longer solely valid; it must now include media, social and economic influences, grey zone problems and hybrid wars (Försvarsmakten, 2018). The Swedish military

strategy doctrine describes, for example, the importance of “continually *clarifying interfaces* and *partnerships* with other actors” (Försvarsmakten, 2016, p. 36). This is to be done through cooperation: “We must be able to provide as well as receive civil and military support” (Government Offices of Sweden, 2015). The current reshaping of the Swedish Armed Forces is not about steering it back to a national territorial focus or returning to the order and organisational principles that applied before the fall of the Berlin Wall. The challenge involves building a new military defence meeting the requirement to “act on demand,” both nationally and internationally (Försvarsmakten, 2017, p. 18). This reconfiguration of the SAF follows the same development documented in numerous other Western countries (Moskos, Williams & Segal, 2000; Snider & Matthews, 2005; King, 2011).

Some interdependent factors become particularly important in the Swedish case: Staffing levels and the ability to increase the number of employees are crucial to meet this task. The Swedish Armed Forces have gone from being one of Sweden’s largest educational institutions at the beginning of the 1980s (with a national focus), to being radically downscaled during the 1990s and beginning of the 2000s (with an international focus), before once again being vigorously expanded during the 2020s. Now expansion on all fronts is required, including a more than doubling of the number of personnel, with an increase from 53,900 to 118,600 (Försvarsmakten 2018, p. 61).

In Sweden today, the concept of *total defence* is emphasized as the strategic order under which “the Swedish Armed Forces must work together with the rest of society to meet the challenges during times of peace, crisis, heightened state of preparedness, and war” (Försvarsmakten, 2016, p. 45). This in turn highlights the importance of the population’s understanding of, and support for, strong defence of the nation: “The whole of Swedish society has a role to play in the total defence system and the public’s support of the total defence system is key to the will to defend the nation and ultimately for Sweden’s defence capability” (SOU, 2016, p. 50). Together these three factors – growth, total defence and public support – form the arena that the SAF need to address and manage.

Another factor is that the nature of peacekeeping operations has changed since the end of the Cold War in 1991, with peace now rarely being a realistic ultimate objective. Initially presented as a “traditional” peacekeeping mission but subsequently developing into the most extensive and complex Swedish military mission in modern times, the experience of the war in Afghanistan (2004–2014) serves as an instructive example of the complexity of military missions in the 21st century where, despite massive institutional, military and humanitarian efforts, there is no victory to be won and no peace in prospect. In retrospect, when analysing the Swedish military contribution in Afghanistan it was concluded: “The effort did

not comply with Swedish traditional crisis management, since this was not flexible enough to provide it with an adequate management structure” (SOU, 2017, p. 12). When the Government Offices of Sweden (2017) subsequently evaluated the mission, it was determined that, while “the fulfilment of the objectives of the Swedish engagement in Afghanistan between 2002 and 2014 was highly inadequate” (Government Offices of Sweden, 2017, p. 11), “objectives were fulfilled satisfactorily in terms of Sweden’s credibility and capability as a participant in international military operations” (Government Offices of Sweden 2017, p. 12).¹

These factors, among others, form new conditions and place new demands on the officers’ professional skills (Edström, Lunde & Matlary, 2009; Ledberg, 2019). Concepts such as “comprehensive approach,” “end state” and “second generation peacekeeping” indicate that military engagement requires not only military units but collaboration with a range of civilian specialists, too, if societal change and the building of civilian institutions are to be possible (Granberg, 2013, p. 23). Today, participation in international operations is considered just as important as the building of national defence. Consequently, the SAF and its employees are expected to be able to collaborate with a diverse range of actors in various complex interfaces, both nationally and internationally. This is the context shaping the officer’s experience of service today. If what it means to be a skilled officer today is no longer what it meant during the post-Cold War period, we need new ways of understanding and developing military professionalism.

Aim

This chapter investigates how these new objectives and the organisational conditions they imply together re-shape what it means to be an officer in the Swedish Armed Forces. An investigation of professionalism as a concept must include both an organisational perspective (in the form of systems, methods, rules, objectives, etc.) and a focus on the people in the organisation – in this case, the officers. There are many ways of defining military professionalism (Snider & Matthews, 2005; Paparone, Anderson & McDaniel, 2008). This article follows the view expressed by the SAF, which is that an officer’s professionalism involves acting according to “scientific data and proven experience” (Försvarsmakten, 2006, p. 16). The the-

1 See also Agrell (2013), describing Sweden’s involvement in the Afghanistan mission as sort of sliding into “a war that just happened” that “the interventions were meant to stabilise and normalise.” This was not what happened, however; rather, “the interventions brought about armed conflicts” and “stabilisation led to chaos” (p. 318)

oretical starting point is the epistemology of professional knowledge, sometimes also referred to as – or closely related to – the epistemology of reflective practice, and follows the distinction made by the philosopher Gilbert Ryle (1949, pp. 25–51) between practical knowledge (*knowing how*) and propositional knowledge (*knowing that*). By using a set of epistemological concepts, this chapter presents an analytical framework that focuses on the types of knowledge an officer needs in order to act professionally and to meet the various demands made upon them.

Founded on the assumption of skills being knowledge expressed in action, with a focus on the active sense of knowing rather than on knowledge as a passive noun (Ryle, 1949; Schön, 1983; Snider, 2017), this investigation further aims to explore and problematize the concept of “military professionalism” in Swedish military practice. By illuminating the ongoing transformation of the SAF with the help of epistemological perspectives, the focus is broadened to not only describe the goal – that is, what is to be achieved – but to describe the skills required and the learning processes supporting them. Two theoretical lenses are borrowed from Ellström (1997, p. 45): the concept of *competence-in-use* (Figure 1) and a distinction between *theoretical/explicit knowledge* and *experience-based/implicit know-how* (Table 1).

The empirical part of the investigation builds on data (selected quotes) from two research projects conducted within the SAF. The research project Modern Military Professionalism (MMP), begun more than 10 years ago, is a longitudinal qualitative study documented in a series of anthologies (Tillberg, Svartheden & Engstedt, 2008; Tillberg & Tillberg, 2013; Tillberg, Tillberg, Svartheden, Rahmström & Hildebrandt, 2017; Victor Tillberg, 2018; Victor Tillberg, 2020). MMP investigates Swedish military professional skills by allowing officers to describe experiences of situations in which their judgement has been tested and their skills demonstrated. Both in-depth interviews and a specific writing method have been used.² While the main focus has been on situations where officers have met and handled problematic situations during international missions, the material also contains descriptions of challenging situations at home. As a more specified continuation and complement to the above investigation, five in-depth interviews with Swedish officers were conducted between 2016 and 2020. In this part of the study, more precise questions were asked about the relationship and the differences

2 The writing method used is the Dialogue Seminar Method (DSM). DSM combines systematically conducted meetings with informants’ writing about their own experience of challenging situations followed by subsequently structured and documented focus group discussions (Göranzon, Hammarén & Ennals, 2006). A thorough description of the MMP research project can be found in Uppdrag militär – perspektiv på militärt yrkeskunnande (2018).

between the use of military skills at home and abroad. The officers interviewed were all men born between 1955 and 1970. At the time of interview, two were lieutenant colonels, one was a colonel and two were generals. Three represented the army, one the navy and one the air force. Four were actively engaged in managerial assignments at SAF headquarters and one had assignments in an international military headquarter abroad. All five had experience of international missions; four had held commanding positions in a mission of this kind. These interviews constitute the principal empirical part of the analysis of this chapter.

Following this is a brief overview of the ways in which the officer's role has developed over time, both internationally and in Sweden. The theoretical starting points are then described; here, the concept of competence-in-use serves as a basis for an in-depth discussion of how different perspectives on knowledge have consequences for the perception of professionalism in the profession of officer. In the reflection that follows, theoretical perspectives are interspersed with the officers' statements and with other sources. In the concluding discussion, suggestions are made for alternative ways of rethinking and understanding the paradoxes and contradictions integral to the concept of modern military professionalism. Given the limited nature of the empirical data, the purpose of the chapter is not to present any general conclusions; the interviewees' statements and other examples are used exploratively, generating and describing deeper insight into different perspectives, thereby contributing to the ongoing dynamic discussion concerning what military professionalism is – or what it should be.

The Officer and Military Professionalism

According to the policy document “Vår militära profession – agerar när det krävs” (“Our military profession – action when action is required”) (Försvarsmakten, 2017, p. 25), the Swedish Officer's distinctive area of expertise is the ability to lead and organise armed combat and to “decide when, and to what degree, military force must should be used to carry out the task.” The document continues:

Various areas of knowledge interact and integrate in a professional expertise that embraces theoretical, practical and experience based knowledge. The officer's role is to coordinate these combined capabilities to achieve the desired effect. This requires a complex system for the division of labour within the organization, which is divided according to both horizontally and vertically in terms of competence requirements. (Försvarsmakten, 2017)

The Swedish officer must therefore be able to act in constantly changing environments and to collaborate both horizontally and vertically – that is, both within their own organisation and with representatives of other organisations. The transition from a mass army to smaller defence-oriented units gives the term “military professionalism” new meaning. In 1975, Feld defined military professionalism as “an officer class conforming to a model according to which the recruitment, training and assignment of its members are carried out entirely in terms of internally formulated criteria” (Feld, 1975, p. 192). It was important to create a system that eliminated the sense of any privileged class. Ten years later, Gates showed how the army and its officers could no longer be considered sealed from outside influences, calling it a “role expansion” where “the clear distinction between roles that existed earlier began to break down; military officers became increasingly involved in politics, statecraft, and the provision of internal as well as external defense” (Gates 1985, pp. 427–428). Paparone, Anderson & McDaniel (2008, p. 434) discussed the possible result of this “role expansion” in terms of “setting organisational conditions that move authority to organisational members as a function of shared knowledge, competence and ethical reasoning rather than as a function of hierarchical position.”

The tension between the task of using force and administrative logic is reflected in the different ways that the term “military professionalism” has been understood over time (Snider & Matthews, 2005; Sookermary, 2012). The discussion about military professionalism thus takes place in an interchange between political, organisational, professional and individual perspectives. The SAF policy document “Vår militära profession – agerar när det krävs” (“Our military profession – action when action is required”) describes desirable military skills as twofold: on one hand they should follow a military logic, founded on the essence of war; on the other, they use an administrative logic, founded on the principles of the central government (Försvarsmakten, 2017, p. 12). The SAF clearly state that to assume the profession of officer, one must master both the military logic and the logic of public administration; the two belong together, and it is not enough to know one without the other (Försvarsmakten, 2017, p. 28). In the early 2020s, discussions about the profession of officer are often about adequacy in the role and dealing with conflicting demands: “For the past two decades, professional debates have brought attention to a myriad of unconventional challenges and demands being placed upon commanders at all levels” (Roennfeldt, 2019, p. 45).³ Swedish

3 “U.S. military doctrines and policy documents list a host of relevant skill sets for officers, such as the ability to cooperate with civilians in multiagency and multinational operations abroad ... the ability to operate beyond the physical battleground and across multiple domains, including public perception ... and the ability to think critically and creatively.” Roennfeldt (2019, pp. 45–46)

military doctrine and policy are no exception. This statement can be contrasted with Janowitz's notion that "human beings cannot operate effectively if they find themselves under the pressures of conflicting authority" (Janowitz, 1971, p. 423). But as we shall see, conflicting authority can today be said to be a basic prerequisite in military practice, a point which recent research on the officer profession has also shown (Moskos, Williams & Segal 2000; Hasselbladh & Ydén 2019).

Competence-in-use

Understanding that the transformation of the SAF and the impact of the previously described ongoing changes – role-expansion, the ability to master both administrative logic and military logic, and new forms of vertical and horizontal co-operation – calls for new explanatory models, which competencies are desirable and which learning processes support them? Ellström's 1997 article "The Many Meanings of Occupational Competence And Qualification" offers a theoretical model for structuring the concept of competence that has been used to order the way in which the different aspects of military professionalism can be described. The model initially distinguishes five different aspects:

1. Formal competence (measurable through, for example, years spent in school, points, grades);
2. Actual competence (the individual's potential capacity to handle problems and tasks);
3. Officially demanded competence (precise job description); and
4. Competence required by the job (the qualifications required).

Here, the first two focus on the individual's ability; the latter two focus on the external organisational aspects required by the job. Together, these form aspect 5, the actual competence-in-use, which denotes the kind of real-life situations and tasks that an individual has to perform and, thus, focuses on the interaction between the individual and the job (Ellström, 1997, pp. 42– 43).

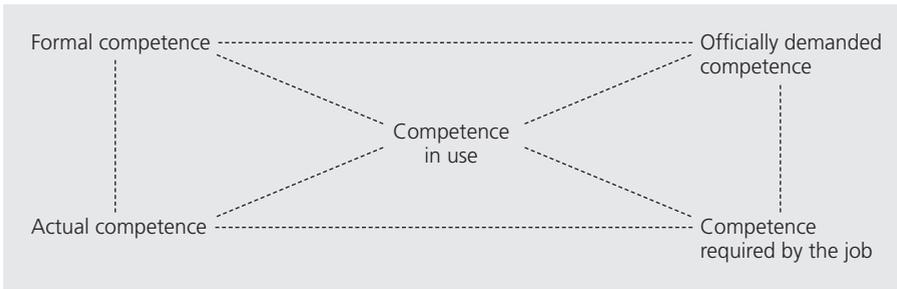


Figure 1. Different meanings of occupational competence.

The concept “competence-in-use,” used as a point of departure for investigating how officers describe work-related challenges related to role- and task-expansion, directs attention to what it really means to participate actively in a professional practices. While the model was initially developed to highlight various forms of learning in an individual’s professional life, it has also been used as a basic model in Swedish military education (Försvarsmakten, 1998; Försvarsmakten, 2001; Försvarsmakten, 2006). Granberg (2013), for example, understands “competence” as arising from the interaction between our subjective understanding, knowledge, skills and experiences, and different kinds of artefacts that enable certain actions, in the course of the successful execution of a specific task. Thus, competence is not only about what people “can do” individually or together; it is about what they have access to in the form of both physical resources, tools and instruments and instructions, methodology and rules.

This analysis and categorisation can serve as a starting point for the exploration of the skills and learning processes permitting and supporting the development of military professionalism, conducted through an exploration of the empirical data, that follows. What are the perceptions and experiences shared by Swedish officers of the SAF’s assumption that they should master both a military and an administrative logic? The analysis shows that there is an intra-professional tension between two different positions, or *topoi*.

The Aristotelian concept of *topos* is a spatial metaphor for knowledge where one imagines that arguments, concepts and ideas are organised in relation to each other like a landscape (Wolrath Söderberg, 2019). A *topos* focuses on pre-conceived understandings and unspoken/unconscious points of departure that we consider valid and obvious and which can help draw attention to habitual argumentation and reasoning. By paying attention to the arguments and the linguistic choices made, thinking becomes visible; if, as Wolrath Söderberg (2019, p. 166) describes, we are in possession of a vocabulary for these arguments and

instances of habitual reasoning, they can be discerned, discussed, criticised and then replaced (see also Ramirez, 1995). Immediately below, the statements of two officers in the study, “Officer S” and “Officer H,” are used to represent two different, yet common, lines of argument.

Manoeuvre Warrior – Not an Administrator

A Swedish officer is expected to be able to maintain combat capability whilst simultaneously operating in a public administrative structure (Försvarsmakten, 2017, p. 28). Such an expectation can be classified under what Ellström (1997) calls *competence-required-by-job* (Figure 1). The expectation to master both, however, is not unproblematic and is widely discussed within the profession of the Swedish officer. When Officer S notes that “if the major part of the management training concentrates on compliance with rules and repeatable anticipated actions, there is a great risk that commanders will not be capable of acting in unforeseen situations,” it is out of concern that an officer’s training does not foster the abilities required to handle unforeseen situations.

In Sweden, the philosophy of mission command (*auftragstaktik*) has been applied since the days of the Cold War.⁴ Generations of Swedish soldiers, including those interviewed in this study, have been schooled in an active tradition the Swedish Army Field Manual *Taktik AR2* describes as being “practised both through the commander assigning tasks, issuing guidelines and allocating resources, and by allowing the person solving the task to decide as much as possible about how it will be achieved (Försvarsmakten, 1995, p. 76); indeed, the subordinate’s freedom to choose how to perform the task will only be restricted in exceptional cases (Försvarsmakten, 1995, p. 78). The Swedish officer is, therefore, schooled in an organisational system where the individual has room for flexibility and is expected to act independently and proactively.

Officer S continues:

Manoeuvre warfare is about staying mentally active, outsmarting the opponent, throwing him off balance and finally outmanoeuvring him. For this to be feasible, it is not people who are trained in Taylorist methodology who are required. Manoeuvre warriors are often perceived as chaotic and contentious. Such people can be perceived by

⁴ For a current and in-depth discussion on the application of mission command in the Swedish Armed Forces, see Palmqvist (2020).

many as difficult to control. They do not fit into the world of management, where the primary concern is that everything is well ordered. In the bureaucracy of peace, these people do not fit in, but they are required in crises and in armed warfare. (interview with officer S)

Officer S describes how the officer's competencies do not develop within the administrative logic that the officer is expected to master in the SAF.⁵ The above quotes highlight the contradiction described by Ydén (2008, p. 231) as two different logics "reproduced in isolation from each other."⁶ The statements by Officer S can be said to represent a widespread concern among his colleagues that, if they are not given the opportunity to develop and train the competence required for crisis, war and conflict situations, there is a risk that such competencies will not be developed and thus cannot be drawn on when needed. Officer S expresses an "either or perspective": a manoeuvre warrior is not an administrator.

Combat capability and administrative skills?

An opposing viewpoint is given by Officer H, a high-ranking officer at the SAF headquarters:

You have to be able to manage both administration and military logic and understand the difference. For me, it is important to understand the distinction between when you can apply mission command and when you may need to be a little more guided. It depends on what the situation is and the type of task at hand. (interview with officer H)

Indeed, for Officer H, both administration and warfare are necessary parts of the officer's profession that can and should be developed:

As a manager in this position, I have a number of limitations in what I can do in terms of mission command – but I also have opportuni-

5 When saying this, Officer S is a top-level officer with experiences at the operational, tactical and strategic levels, and has worked at headquarters both nationally and internationally.

6 The 2008 thesis "Kriget" och karriärsystemet – försvarsmaktens organiserande i fred ("The war" and the career system) uses contradictory logics of action as set out by Boënes to describe the situation in the Swedish Armed Forces. On the one hand, the logic of external conflict refers to the use of violence in life-threatening situations, contrasting with the logic of internal cooperation, which refers to interactions aimed at creating relationships and legitimacy (Ydén 2008, p. 257).

ties. But it's something completely different from being a force commander in operation [anonymised], with different resources. There I don't have to take into account aspects that I have to consider in my current position. You must be able to separate, analyse and understand. (interview with officer H)

Where Officer S believes that it is difficult, maybe impossible, to simultaneously cultivate the competencies required to manage administrative logic and manoeuvre warfare, Officer H considers management and problem-solving to occur within two different knowledge domains imposing different demands: the officer must be able to “separate, analyse and understand.” Thus an officer cannot choose to be either warrior and administrator; the twin capacities are a fundamental necessity. For Officer H, it is possible to be a “warrior-administrator.” Officer S's and Officer H's statements can be said to represent two different perspectives of the view of officers' competence-in-use, differentiated in the question of the taking of action in anticipated or unforeseen situations. While Officer H's endorsement of the importance of predictability, planning and control recall what is found in, and characterise, regulations, doctrine and user manuals (Försvarsmakten, 2006; Försvarsmakten, 2016; Palmqvist, 2020), the two officers' different perspectives address the question of how different kinds of knowledge produce different results.

Different Aspects of Competence and Work

Ellström (1997) offers a conceptual division between two perspectives useful in clarifying the distinctions, or contradictions, between Officer S and Officer H's statements. These are called *cognitive-rational* (CR) and *intuitive-contextual* (IC).

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Aspect	Perspective	
	Cognitive-rational	Intuitive-contextual
Type of task situation Information for action	Well defined/linear Certain Objective data (quantitative, measurable) Emotionally neutral	Ill-defined/complex Uncertain Holistic sensory deprivation Pattern recognition Emotionally coloured
Information processing	Analytical	Intuitive
Mode of action	Technical-instrumental Separation between planning and action "Problem-solving-in-thought"	Interactive-contextual Interaction between planning and action "Problem-solving-in-action"
Knowledge base	Theoretical/declarative Explicit	Practical/experience based Implicit (tacit)
Communication/ social interaction Mode of learning	Instrumental Impersonal Formal education and training Instruction	Dialogical Personal Informal learning in everyday practice Situated learning

Table 1. Some different aspects of a cognitive-rational and an intuitive-contextual perspective on competence and work.

Here, the designation "intuitive-contextual" fits well with officers' descriptions of what is required in international operations (Tillberg, Svartheden & Engstedt, 2008; King, 2011; Ben-Ari, 2018). Officer S, who has experience of several international engagements in commanding positions, says:

In war and crisis situations it is important to quickly create an adequate structure based on a given situation and then, from this uncertain structure, make decisions about the measures that need to be taken. It is about being able to act and take the initiative in a given situation. People who can act in uncertain situations possess one or more of the following abilities: an understanding of patterns based on experience gained from similar situations; creativity and imagination (and by this, I mean that they can quickly envisage different scenarios about what could happen if they do not act); and decisiveness. (interview with officer S)

With a clear focus on dealing with “the unforeseen,” the intuitive–contextual perspective lies close to the mission command idea of solving problems and managing situations; the cognitive–rational perspective, meanwhile, conforms with the requirements for predictability and control made by an administrative logic. In this perspective, the person engaged in the activity needs to be, as expressed by Officer H, “more guided” and to accept predetermined methods for solving problems. The point made by Ellström (1997) about the division of perspectives is not that they are mutually exclusive, but, rather, that they complement each other: “In practice this means a continuous movement between routine and non-routine work, as well as well-defined, repeated tasks and poorly understood, rarely occurring problem situations” (Ellström, 1997, p. 46).

In a military context Ben-Ari (2018) frames the modern military leader’s challenge as effecting “collective and coordinated action among varied constituent elements each with its own goal, interests and modes of action.” The notion of “continuous movement” (Ellström, 1997), is not, however, entirely unproblematic in military practice, and it is possible that the division can only work as long as the workload is reasonable and the level of complexity is low. Ben-Ari (2018, p. 65) describes the change in the armed forces of the industrial democracies not as a linear but as a cumulative development “in which new mission, roles and environments are *combined* with prior ones. This model includes the simultaneous existence of older more conventional roles and behaviors together with (and not necessarily being replaced by) newer functions and practices.” Regardless of the degree of complexity, the model offered by Ellström (1997) is useful in determining forms of knowledge applicable to situations that are incongruous, unpredictable and non-linear.

When Rules Clash

Earlier research on military professional skills shows that competence-in-use first becomes apparent when the task or situation requires an intervention (Blomgren, 2007; Tillberg, Svartheden & Engstedt, 2008). Before a situation arises and a problem is solved or a task is managed, competence-in-use is merely hypothetical; an officer may have knowledge that has been demonstrated and tested during training, but never in situations where it really matters. This is the point of competence-in-use; the concept relates to genuine action.

An officer who acts – assesses, makes a choice, makes decisions – relates constantly, more or less unconsciously, to rules and instructions of various kinds. And it is useful to consider a perspective that Ellström (1997) does not explicitly highlight in the distinctions he draws, but which recurs in the officers’ statements, relating to the different functions of rules. What happens when the available and

explicitly expressed rules and instructions are either too detailed or do not cover all the relevant circumstances that must be taken into account? From time to time an officer needs to make contradictory decisions and to prioritise in the course of difficult-to-assess situations. Where Officer S spoke of the risks of complete compliance with the rules in problematic and unpredictable situations, Officer A, who has an administrative position at the SAF Headquarters, says:

I have given a lot of thought to this rule-following. The Swedish Armed Forces is an operational creature, but also a bureaucratic machine. Somewhere in all this the rules are a foundation stone of the organisation. This is called: “A predetermined task at a price known in advance.” *But that’s not how it works in reality.* (interview with officer A, my italics)

The above contains several interesting intellectual constructs. If the military organisation is both a bureaucratic machine *and* an operational creature – what does that mean for those active in it? Officer A implies that while the organisation may be founded on rules, there exists a discrepancy between those rules (“a predetermined task at a price known in advance”) and his experience of how it works in practice (“that’s not how it works in reality.”) Officer A says that “in reality” some tasks are solved in other ways and refers to decisions and solutions made outside of the regulations. Another officer says: “You have to learn to cheat, to manage the system.”

Officer A’s statement problematises the idea that rules are perceived and applied in different ways. Managing tax-payers’ money is a basic rule in all tax-financed activities; “a predetermined task at a price known in advance,” then, belongs to the category *normative rules*. There are rules that specify which actions are permitted and which are not (Johannessen, 2006, p. 278) – laws, instructions and user manuals, for example. Normative rules are formed in such a way so as to be universal in order to suit a large range of circumstances (Tillberg, 2006, p. 160). But as consequence, a normative rule is always more or less abstract and can seldom capture every aspects of any individual case. Officers who have to act in a situation must relate to rules using both previous experiences and professional discretion.

It is useful to compare normative rules to *constitutive rules*. Differing from normative rules in being often unspoken and not explicitly formulated, constitutive rules are embedded in action and make themselves apparent through the ways in which the action is carried out, in terms of habits or customs (Göranzon, 2001; Tillberg, 2006). The distinction between normative and constitutive rules highlights the fact that *the way* a rule is formulated is no guarantee that it will be fol-

lowed satisfactorily. In various situations, the officer needs to apply different forms of knowledge and to follow different rules depending on circumstances.

Below is an illustration of how theoretical/explicit knowledge and experience-based implicit know-how must be combined when rules clash; here, a Swedish officer in Afghanistan managing Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLT), discusses how overall general rules (Standard Operating Procedures, or SOPs) were managed pragmatically during a mission using exemption cards:

This type of directive [an SOP] may have consequences if too detailed and also if the authority to revoke it is not granted. ISAF HQ had noticed this and introduced a Force Exemption Card, which entitled the holder to deviate from the SOP. These cards were available at different levels that provided various mandates for what to deviate from, for example what equipment to carry or rules about how you should be equipped when advancing in a vehicle. All my commanders had these cards. All I demanded of them was that they should always notify me if they decided to use them. This ensured that the on-site commander could decide to depart from the rules and regulations when they became obsolete. (Tillberg et al., 2017, p. 211)

This example is interesting for several reasons. First, the fact that there are exemption cards at all shows an organisational awareness of what is required of the person who has to take action and solve problems. Secondly, the introduction of exemption cards is a way of predicting and creating scope for flexibility in predictably unpredictable situations; they are in themselves a recognition of the multifaceted and complex nature of practice. Thirdly, in the example from Afghanistan, both normative and constitutive rules operate simultaneously. The officer and his subordinates move at the same time in the intuitive-contextual and cognitive-rational fields (Table 1). The example shows how a situation can be simultaneously well-defined (Swedish units may not operate in certain geographical areas) and difficult to assess (OMLT units should follow their Afghan partner units regardless of the geographical borders). The person who is to take action in the situation must consider objective data and regulations while assessing the development of events and taking into account the local conditions. The officer describing the example adds another aspect – that of *authority*: “The question is then, how do I ensure that the authority to make a different decision resides in the right place, with the right person, at the

right time” (Tillberg et al., 2017, p. 211). A further demand, therefore, falls upon the officer, which is that of defining a certain room for flexibility and a mandate for decision-making. The question or dilemma of being able to place authority in the right and relevant person or level is also described in peacetime, at home, in the officers’ time-management (Victor Tillberg, 2020, p. 56).

Juggling Overwhelming Demands

An officer is expected to manage situations arising simultaneously and from every quarter. A Swedish officer’s work is performed in various “arenas,” each making different demands and calling for different kinds of rules. Ben-Ari highlights this organisational development in terms of a loosening of external and internal boundaries within military organisations leading to less fixed structures and to temporary systems “whose elements, both people and technologies, are assembled and disassembled according to the shifting needs of specific projects” (Ben-Ari, 2018, p. 61).

Officer L describes his experience of the officer’s profession: “The risk is that the proportions of management or performance of duties play too large a role. During daily work, all the different formal reporting routines can take over from the activities.” When saying this, he provides examples from both missions abroad and at home. Administrative demands can be overwhelming in both peacetime bureaucracy and during missions (Roennfeldt, 2019; Wong & Gerras, 2015). American officers describe how, for example, they did not report hostile contact with the enemy in Afghanistan so as to avoid having to make the subsequent obligatory storyboard presentation: “What’s better – spending 15 minutes making this storyboard or planning my next operation?” and “It became a cut and paste gig” (Wong & Gerras, 2015, p. 15). The report describes how a practice of shortcuts and sidesteps is established to escape what is perceived as an unnecessary administrative burden: “We found ways to beat the system” and “we gave them what they wanted” (Wong & Gerras, 2015, p. 14).

Agrell (2013) observed a contrary tendency in the Swedish missions in Afghanistan. Analysing the final reports from the units, he noted the reports become increasingly extensive over time in both number of pages and richness of detail: “*feeding the monster* was the term used to describe RC North’s endless appetite for reporting” (Agrell, 2013, pp. 325–326). The officers in Wong and Gerras’s investigation of 2015, meanwhile, describe how the administrative burden prevented them from performing their real task – fulfilling the mission. Together,

the complexity and the time required present the officers problems; at certain moments they find themselves obliged to make a choice in prioritising what is most important. Swedish officers often express similar experiences from international operations, but also concerning everyday administration (Victor Tillberg & Tillberg, 2013). Searching for particular information in the SAF internal case management system “Vidar” is often described with the phrase “Finns i Vidar – finns i sjön (“go fish”).”⁷ Similarly, the difficulty of finding information on the SAF intranet “Emilia” is described with the expression “I magen på Emilia” (“in Emilia’s stomach.”) And an officer who collects administrative tasks and stays behind at the computer until morning in order to work undisturbed and fully concentrated on tasks regarded as stealing time from the officer’s primary function – maintaining the ability for armed combat through the training of soldiers – is said to “stay the night.” This is a topic currently being fiercely debated in the Swedish officers corps. The head of the department of tactics at the Ground Combat School, also a lieutenant colonel, believes that the staff’s characteristics are a consequence of “the culture in which you grow up and are immersed” and asks the critical question:

It nevertheless seems as if the Swedish Officer does not so much eat method for breakfast but is faithful to the method. But we maybe shouldn’t be surprised when we examine the wording and the focus that is used in our user manuals, and how we educate and train. (Palmqvist, 2020)

This statement draws attention to the same fear that Officer S expresses – the risk that administrative tasks might hinder the development of the skills needed in combat situations.

Discussion

The development of the officer’s profession (role-expansion, more and new tasks, increased demands, difficulty finding a balance between administration and core tasks) described in this chapter is not unique to the armed forces, having been high-

7 VIDAR – “Vi Dokumenterar och Arkiverar” (“We document and archive”) is the case management system used by the SAF introduced in 2013. It is a “modern documentation and case management system, where the administrators themselves manage record keeping and the processing of documents” www.cgi.se, downloaded 11 June, 2020.

lighted in other areas of the public sector (Alvesson, 2013; Noordegraaf, 2016). New technology and changing external factors lead to a change in the content of the work and areas of responsibility (Hasselbladh, 2019; Christensen & Lægtheid, 2007). This development means that dependencies change both within organisations and in relation to the outside world and other actors. Noordegraaf (2016) describes the changing forms of professional work as an “attack on the professions”:

The nature of control is at stake. Professional self-regulation was never pure and, increasingly, professionalism becomes dispersed and distributed instead of uniform and concentrated. Whereas public professional workers could protect themselves against the outside world, the outside world is increasingly penetrating professional domains, work and practices. (Noordegraaf, 2016, p. 786)

One recurring conclusion is that the power and control of the profession is at stake: “It is interesting to note that the traditional professions are mainly grounded in their professional skills, while the new groups [e.g. administrators, communicators, IT specialists, coordinators, and in some cases managers] mainly have their roles determined by the organisations’ requirements and administrative work” (Ivarsson, Forsell & Westerberg, 2014, p. 110). As shown above, within SAF, as in many other Western defence forces, the societal and organisational development trends entail changes for the officer profession. Demands and expectations are perceived by the officers interviewed as both extensive and contradictory. The fact that the officer profession is exposed to pressure from both within and without is in itself nothing new. Janowitz (1971, p. 424) is already calling for it when describing the ideal officer of the future as a “whole man” who is “both a modern heroic leader and a military manager.”

What kind of skills must be developed as a result of these changes? This chapter took as its starting point competence-in-use (Ellström, 1997), a concept used to investigate the types of knowledge demanded and encouraged in Swedish military professional practice. One topos is described by Officer S with the words “the manoeuvre warrior is not an administrator.” In this topos, the knowledge of waging war and delivering lethal force risks being subordinated to administrative tasks. Officer H shows us another topos, that of the “the warrior-administrator,” a role constituted by skills understood as fundamentally essential: one does not have the choice of being either warrior or administrator. In the topos “warrior – not an administrator,” operating within an administrative logic (administrative skills) is presented as a contrast to what it means to operate within the logic of war (combat capability). The officers in the examples express that they are either

good at one thing, combat capability, or the other, administrative skills, and that these two fields of activity are most often disconnected or unrelated. The “warrior–administrator” topos could instead be said to follow the SAF policy document “Vår militära profession – agerar när det krävs” (“Our military profession – action when action is required”) (Försvarsmakten, 2017) where combat skills and the logic of public administration are described as two equally important parts of the officer’s work. These two different topoi draw attention to an important question about which forms of knowledge are active in the officer’s professional practice and self-understanding. Thinking in terms of division is to (unconsciously) structure the world and make one concept a norm to which the other concept is subordinate (Ramirez, 1995, p. 11). In Figure 1, where cognitive–rational and intuitive–contextual perspectives are described, these concepts can easily be interpreted as being in opposition, even if this is not the intention of the author (Ellström, 1997).

Building on what has been discussed earlier in this chapter, the following concluding remarks suggest some alternative ways of looking at the development of the profession of officer. An exploration of how the cognitive–rational and intuitive–contextual forms of knowledge instead benefit and support each other offers a way forward for the development of military professionalism. There is also a need for research exploring the gap between officers’ perceptions of the two identified mental landscapes, “the warrior – administrator” and “the manoeuvre warrior – not an administrator.” One way to further explore this is to use a multilevel analysis to examine examples of modern military professionalism, both good and bad.

Conclusions

The officer’s competence-in-use is based on both practical and theoretical forms of knowledge (Figure 1). The Swedish officer’s professional practice takes place in a dynamic field of tensions where it is crucial that one possesses the ability to handle both anticipated administrative tasks and unforeseen situations. These tensions and dynamics are nothing new in themselves and have been previously documented in various forms (Janowitz, 1971; Snider & Matthews 2005; Paparone, Anderson & McDaniel, 2008). This chapter, however, contributes with a developed conceptual apparatus that can be used in further research on the risks and the potential benefits linked to these tensions. There are therefore good reasons to examine differences in this respect between the Scandinavian countries in more detail (see introduction, this volume).

Finally, what is “new” in a new modern military professionalism? Maybe not so much after all. The ingredients of modern military professionalism as they relate to

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professional judgment have been described in literature and theory for a long time. It is time to take a closer look at the professional practice at the level of execution and improve the forms of knowledge connected to officers' competence-in-use: the constant movement between theory and practice. This calls for a reconfiguration of the conceptual apparatus, taking into account the practice in itself – where clues to mastering both the planned and the unforeseen are to be found.

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7. Unpacking the Concept of the “Military Profession”: Accounting for Variations in Military Organisations

Karl Ydén

The concept of “the military profession” has gained considerable traction within the Swedish military establishment over the past decade – a rapid ascendance after decades of what could be considered a rather conspicuous absence. Indeed, Bengt Abrahamsson’s 1971 PhD thesis *Military Professionalization and Political Power*, is held to be a classic (Snider & Watkins, 2002), comparable to Huntington (1957), Janowitz (1960) and Vagts (1959). But although Abrahamsson was Swedish, his thesis on military professionalism was absent from the reading lists of programme-based education of Swedish military officers since its publication.

Abrahamsson (1971) employs the categories *expertise*, *ethics* and *corporateness* to discuss military professionalism. Expertise Abrahamsson understands to be both theoretical and practical in nature, consisting of abstract knowledge and proven methods for its application. But a profession is more than the practical application of abstract knowledge, no matter how advanced: central to any profession are ethics guiding the professional’s use of that expertise, regulating how they relate to the assignment, the client, the general public and to those affected by their actions. The third component, corporateness, arises essentially from a specific community sharing knowledge, practice, and a consensus regarding ethical guidelines.

Abrahamsson's landmark thesis notwithstanding, until the early 2000s, the concept of military profession was scarcely mentioned in Professional Military Education, in any official military documents or in research projects commissioned by the Swedish Armed Forces. In 2016, however, the Swedish Armed Forces (SAF) published the text "Our Military Profession," the result of a concentrated effort to produce a coherent description of the topic, signed by the Supreme Commander, General Bydén (see Berndtsson, this volume). A few years earlier, the Swedish National Defence College had started a "military profession" course aimed at mid-level officers and had outlined which personnel categories qualified as members of "the profession".

This chapter discusses the background contributing to the rapid ascendance of the concept of a military profession in Sweden; further, it explores some practical implications for the analysis of armed forces arising from the application of theories of professions and organisation. Aspects of training and development are also briefly discussed from that angle. The development of military professionalism necessitates recognising the considerable variety of contexts and competence needs within a highly complex organisation (Perrow, 1986). It is argued that exaggerating similarities between army, air force and navy officers risks undermining genuine military professionalism in the name of "the military profession."

Without elaborating on the early 1960s Huntington-Janowitz debate, it is necessary to mention the notable influence of the United States on modern Swedish thinking about military professionalism. As a doctoral student, Abrahamsson spent a period of time at Morris Janowitz's Department of Sociology at the University of Chicago. A more recent inspiration was the 1990s U.S. Army project "The Future of the Army Profession," which yielded two volumes in quick succession (Snider & Watkins, 2002; Snider & Matthews, 2005). The endeavour was significantly driven, in the post-Cold War years, by the dissolving of a geopolitical context from which Western armed forces had derived their legitimacy and by the consequences of the prevailing neoliberal consensus on the management of government institutions. At the end of the Cold War began a period of multinational, often violent, peace-enforcement missions, often markedly different from the previously envisioned World War III battle scenarios.

In Sweden, too, it was evident that the collapse of the Soviet Union would have major ramifications for future security and defence policy. An external academic expert invited to comment on Swedish post-Cold War defence and security matters wrote rather prophetically:

The pace of change since 1989 has been extraordinary and, despite many calls for a period of stability, as the armed forces of the ad-

vanced societies enter the twenty-first century, one of the few things they can be certain of is further change. (Dandeker, 1999, 3)

This prediction could not have been more correct. Since 1999, the Swedish Armed Forces have undergone a period of constant, even accelerating, transformation. In this period, military objectives have been refocused from territorial defence to international missions and, from 2014, back to territorial defence; there has been a Human Resources reform impacting substantially on the everyday job content of junior officers; the Non-Commissioned Officer category abolished in the early 1980s has been reintroduced; there has been a move from conscription to an all-volunteer force system, and then a resumption of conscription. This time of turbulence also has seen a transformation of the system for junior officer training and education, altered from a branch-specific two-year vocational training bloc to a one-size-fits-most, centralised, three-year academic programme.

The ascendancy of the concept of the military profession in the Swedish defence sector can be attributed to two principal factors. The first is the post-Cold War internationalisation of the Swedish Armed Forces, obliging Swedish military personnel on international missions to interact more closely with militaries from other industrial democracies; simultaneously, a wider shift in Swedish security and defence orientation has occurred as the Cold War-era stance of Swedish exceptionalism gave way to a wish to be more similar to major Western powers – a development made in tandem with Sweden’s 1990s post-neutral foreign policy orientation which aimed at European Community membership. Many equivalent effects could be seen as the Swedish Armed Forces rather quickly adopted various features from other nations, among them a Combat Camera Team and Headquarters policy texts on issues like doctrine and the military profession. These texts were inspired mainly by similar efforts in the defence establishments of the United States and Canada, respectively. The SAF booklet “Our Military Profession” is primarily a broad, inclusive policy statement with little direction regarding detailed organisational decisions (see Berndtsson; Victor Tillberg, this volume).

While this first driver of the concept was largely environmental/external, the second was domestic; the concept of “the military profession” was used by the Swedish National Defence College to market its model of military academisation. Various ways of infusing university-based components into the system for professional military education (PME) had been discussed at the headquarters of the Swedish Armed Forces since the 1980s. The discussion followed a 1977 decision by the Swedish Parliament to transfer almost all advanced vocational training in Sweden from various branch institutes to the university sector, a follow-on from the 1960s enlargement of higher education when “welfare professions” such

as teachers, nurses and social workers all developed three-year undergraduate courses (Agevall & Olofsson, 2014). The training of military and police officers eluded this trend toward academisation, retaining in-house, specialised, often primarily hands-on, programme-based training.

In the post-Cold War period, the gradual downsizing of the Swedish Armed Forces and its reorientation towards international missions led the Swedish government to rethink military careers. The “new normal” was to be that a majority of officers were to switch to civilian jobs in their late 30s, and the analysis held that this would become much easier if officer education led to an academic degree and diploma. The thinking was that academic qualifications would elevate the societal status of the officer corps, or at least preserve it in a society where an increasing number of occupations underwent university training. An academic officer degree would, it was argued, make military knowledge increasingly visible and more recognized by other occupational groups – not least in the civilian HR departments, where the decisions regarding the hiring of former officers would be made.

In the early 2000s, the Swedish National Defence College (NDC) started developing a model for a uniform, centralised three-year academic programme for officer cadets, with academic subjects exclusive to the college itself (e.g. war science, leadership and military technology). The NDC management declared that in order for the Swedish officer corps to become a proper profession, officer education had to consist of military academic subjects to be studied at the NDC, all the way from undergraduate level (basic officer training) to graduate level (a master level career course).¹ This, it was held, was the only way the Swedish officer corps could “conquer their profession.” It should be noted that the model includes all three military services: army, navy and air force (which is a very rare approach to junior officer training, at least in the industrial democracies). Thus, in this PME context, “the military profession” became synonymous with the project of transforming officer training into a centralised three-year military academic programme (see Hedlund, 2004, for a more detailed analysis).

In a recent critique, NDC academic staff and mid-level officers (Alvinus et al. 2020) claim that, rather than leading to professionalisation, the military academisation effort risks an outright de-professionalisation of the officers. Their argument is that the effort to academise officer education has caused the curriculum

1 The Swedish National Defence College view effectively implies that a very large majority of officers in the United States, Britain, Germany and France should not be considered members of a military profession, since their academic degrees are typically not in academic disciplines exclusive to military colleges and universities.

to diverge from professional practice, especially at the junior officer level. A shift towards theoretical content has, they maintain, steered the training of junior officers away from the genuine occupational demands awaiting after graduation.

While this chapter does not want to discount the up-close observations of NDC staff and military students, it will argue that even with a rebalancing towards less theory and more practical elements, the education and training of junior officers could end up rather wide of the mark for many cadets. A fundamental problem stems from the fact that the NDC approach to the military profession concept implies far too much similarity between arms and branches, resulting in a de facto lack of specialisation. The Swedish Officer’s Programme, marketed using a “military profession” label, is organised along one-size-fits-most principles, where navy, air force and army cadets (supposedly part of the same profession) receive largely identical educational content at the Military Academy over four semesters, with the addition of two semesters of more specialised training in different parts of the Swedish Armed Forces.

Both Navy and Air Force officers have stated that the Officer’s Programme is “army-centric.” A Navy cadet observes that at the Military Academy all cadets collectively undergo substantial amounts of infantry combat training, resulting in a lack of arena-specific skills such as sea warfare training (Sjödin 2013, p. 214). In a more recent assessment, two naval officers conclude:

“The problem that the Navy has long pointed out and tried to address is that the newly graduated naval officers do not have sufficient knowledge to take up their first position... the real testing practical navigation periods come after graduation, which worst case means that the cadet has trained – and been employed – in a profession he/she is unable to perform.” (Nilsson & Martinsson, 2021, p. 179).

This sentiment is voiced not only in Navy or Air Force circles; the technical branches within the Army also have reservations, similarly claiming that the focus of the Officer Programme is largely on infantry, often far from the professional needs of junior officers in engineer, signal or artillery units. One Anti-Aircraft colonel stated:

The junior officers we receive are very good people, but they arrive poorly prepared for their task. The designated officer programme output is an infantry platoon leader... Well, what use is somebody trained to be an infantry platoon leader at an anti-aircraft regiment? (Colonel, 2016)

The analysis was based on recent regimental experience. The Anti-Aircraft regiment initially did as told and made the newly arrived junior officers platoon leaders, thinking that with the support of experienced Non-Commissioned Officers the new 2nd Lieutenants would manage. But, having observed the fallout, the regiment quickly revised the policy; a consensus emerged that the gap between what competence is demanded from an actual Anti-Aircraft platoon leader and what the cadets had learnt in the Officer's Programme was simply too big.

Clearly, the observations provide a basis to question the assumption that the notion of one military profession should serve as an unproblematic model for the design of a uniform system for educating junior officers. It is, I argue, misleading to think of military officers as belonging to one single profession from a knowledge perspective, especially at junior level. The skill and knowledge requirements differ considerably, between, say, a junior mechanised infantry officer, a junior anti-aircraft officer, a junior navy officer, and a junior air surveillance and fighter control officer. Whilst differences can similarly exist also in higher military ranks, they are normally lesser, as administrative duties and staff procedures tend to take up more time, whatever the military occupational speciality. Returning to the influence of the United States and the 1990s project "The Future of the Army Profession," it is worth noting that it specifically addresses the *army profession*. Army officer, navy officer and air force officer are sometimes best understood as related and parallel, but nevertheless separate, military occupations within the same organisation.

There are of course related elements across different military services – but I would argue that in terms of delivering junior officer training and education, treating the services largely as one collective risks resulting in the one-size-fits-most solution described above, as has indeed been described by Swedish officers and cadets alike. The Navy cadet Sjödin (2013) reports that much of the four Officer Programme semesters at the Castle Karlberg military academy are spent on generic ground combat content, while only two days in total were devoted to navy-specific content. Sjödin also questions why navy cadets do not get any course in practical leadership. While the reported reason was that navy officers "do not lead troops," the navy cadets were still required to take an army-centric course on counter-insurgency. Other observations, likewise, concern lack of relevant specialisation.

While details in junior officer training have certainly been changed since 2013, the overall programme design remains intact – it remains a one-size-fits-most model, legitimised by the label of military profession and the handing out of academic degrees and diplomas. This would be a case of social closure impacting on functional expertise, in terms of a largely army-centric curriculum only partly relevant for a substantial number of cadets.

A different point of departure would be to view the military as consisting of several professional categories with different skill requirements, each operating according to different logics of action. While a mechanised infantry officer, a navy officer and an air force officer have some things in common at the beginning of their respective careers, their obligations require increasingly different competencies, as they are obliged to manage different technologies and tasks. Some training activities might arguably generate transferable skills – but they can hardly make up for substantial skill deficits, as has been demonstrated in the case of the anti-aircraft regiment. On a related note, Stjernstrom (2020) observes that the meaning and implications of tactical concepts such as “mission command” will be understood quite differently in, for instance, mechanised infantry units and Air Force units, respectively.

In the following, I will broaden the analysis of the concept of the military profession somewhat, looking not only at the content of officer education but also at everyday occupational practice and job content. Depending on the nature of operations and daily duties, it is possible to discuss officer categories in terms of the degrees to which actual professionalism is being developed in training/education and everyday work activities.

A tentative model for analysing military professionalism

In traditional analyses of professions, a long, coherent theoretical education was deemed a prerequisite for professional status. The pursuit of professional status by different occupational groups has therefore generally been intertwined with efforts to establish, or prolong, academic programmes. The first step has normally been an undergraduate degree, with a subsequent master’s degree, and sometimes the addition of a doctoral programme.

In terms of analysing military professionalism, it is obviously relevant to take account not only of the contents of preparatory (junior officer) education or a mid-level career course. Central to any profession is the content of the work proper. Considering professionalism in the Swedish Army, Borell (1989) holds that profession status presupposes both a certain area of professional expert knowledge, and that the application of that expert knowledge takes place under conditions of a level of uncertainty – the reason why discretion is considered a hallmark of professions. While wartime command would meet both these criteria, an army officer’s service in a peacetime, routinised training establishment does not equate to professional work; being a peacetime instructor is simply not the same as being a leader on actual operations.

Expanding on the profession concepts of Borell (1989) and Abrahamsson (1971), it is possible to construct a model of professional expertise that can take into account both the content and relevance of formal education and the content and relevance of occupational practice (Ydén & Hasselbladh, 2010). The model consists of three factors that can be analysed in terms of how they align:



Figure 1. Professionalism as a function of fit/alignment between a) the professional expertise claim, b) the education/training content and c) actual job content.

The model involves a shift in conceptual focus from assumptions of profession status to the analysis of actual professionalism. Formal education/training (theoretical and practical) is certainly an important part, but the added dimension of relevant everyday occupational practice is also emphasised here. The model can be used to highlight clear differences between different officer categories in terms of how well everyday work practice is aligned to both the claim of professionalism and to the content of education and training.

If we take a junior navy officer, the fit between a (supposedly) army-centric Officer's Programme and navy professional practice is not ideal, according to navy cadet Sjödin (2013) and naval officers Nilsson & Martinsson (2021). On the other hand, serving extended periods of time at sea carrying out missions after graduation would rate quite highly in terms of fit between a claim of professionalism and actual occupational practice. If junior officer education were changed towards a stronger navy focus, the fit would obviously improve – thus making the claim of professionalism stronger. If we instead consider a junior (mechanised) infantry officer, the fit between the contents of an allegedly army-centric Officer's Programme and the claim to professionalism would arguably be better than in the navy case, notwithstanding the assertion by Alvinus et al. (2020) of too much theory and too little practice. However, unless the junior infantry officer is regu-

larly serving on operations, the fit between the professional claim and everyday occupational practice will be loose, following Borell’s (1989) argument about service in a routinised training establishment.

Fighter pilot cadets offer a third example, somewhat similar to navy cadets. They undergo specialised flight training before they graduate and are assigned to different fighter squadrons. Arguably, the model thus indicate a functional relationship between the claim of professionalism, the educational and training content, and quotidian occupational practice. Presently, judging by statements from Army, Navy and Air Force insiders, the fighter pilot education model would compare favourably to both the navy and army counterparts, in terms of professionalism.

What is the relation between formal education and the development of qualified professional skills? Education is certainly one way to develop knowledge and know-how – but it is not the only way. Alvesson (2013) discusses the phenomenon of “education fundamentalism”: a derogatory stance towards practical knowledge and the view that formal education is the best way to develop knowledge altogether. Exaggerated beliefs in the value of formal education can be assumed to exist not least in “education organisations” who mainly produce education and training such as universities and parts of the armed forces.

Of course, practice, and reflection on practice, is key to the attainment of genuine professionalism. Compared with real-life situations, the point of education, training and the simulation is to provide a controlled environment where actions can be performed decoupled from their possible real-world consequences:

The purpose of this practicing is to give the neophyte experience in performing under conditions in which ... no actual engagement with the world is allowed, events having been decoupled from their usual embedment in consequentiality. ... What one has here are dry runs, trial sessions, run-throughs – in short, “practicings.” (Goffman, 1974, p. 59)

According to Goffman (1974), an “exercise” is an event in which actions can be separated from their ultimate consequences. This allows for repetition and gradual progress – we are permitted to try until we succeed. That the ultimate consequences of actions are removed means, however, that what constitutes skilful conduct must be determined in other ways than observing the results. In an organisation that routinely separates action from its consequences, it will become more difficult to distinguish and evaluate professionalism in action. According to Goffman, such conditions are conspicuously evident during military exercises:

The world of practice is both simpler and more complex than that of actual, “live” conditions. ...a dry run can only approach “real” conditions, never achieve them. This dilemma is seen most clearly perhaps in war games, where participants must take seriously that which can ultimately be made serious only by what can’t be employed: “live” ammunition lethally directed. (Goffman, 1974, p. 65)

Knowing that acts of violence do not have real consequences makes their execution less anxious – but it also makes it more difficult to judge both the skill with which they are performed and their applicability in a real situation.

It is possible to elaborate further on Goffman’s line of thought by distinguishing between two different contexts in, say, infantry combat exercises. In the first, an exercise is performed by people who know that it precedes an actual combat mission; in the other, the same exercise is performed by people who know (or expect) that no actual mission is imminent. Of course, the two contexts will be different in terms of dynamics, intensity and the acquisition of knowledge. Further, both of these “dry run” contexts are fundamentally different from an actual combat situation marked by uncertainty about what other actors will do and the understanding that any action has real, irreversible consequences.

It is difficult to argue, certainly in a military context, that experience from genuine operations or missions, where actions have real consequences, would provide less valuable learning opportunities than experiences made in the course of education and training, where actions, being simulated, are removed from their real consequences (Ydén & Hasselbladh, 2010). Education and training with simulations of reality are certainly necessary, but should not be axiomatically treated as superior to practical experience with respect to the development of professionalism. For professionalisation, both are necessary.

Characteristic to professions is the link between professional practice and the methodological development of expert knowledge. Professionalisation means that a professional group bases its practice on an expertise continuously developed through scientific methods. In the military, officers can develop expertise by submitting actual military experience and practice to scientific, reflexive analyses:

Professional groups look to academic research for the theoretical core needed to validate their knowledge, and often obtain official recognition through the institution of degree programmes. It is a sign of a coming of age when they can point to the beginnings of a production of Masters and Ph.D. students, professional appointments and other research positions and tasks in “their area.” (Elzinga 1990, p. 151)

Academisation and professionalisation are often linked – but they do not refer to quite the same thing. Academisation means that a student’s education is accepted into a formal academic system. Professionalisation, as mentioned above, means that occupational practices are made the subject of research and reflexive analysis. To what extent a certain design of military officer education is based on relevant research is an open question. Professionalisation can, in theory, occur either with or without the formal education of an academic system; correspondingly, academisation can be accomplished with or without professionalisation as a result.

As noted in the case of police officer training, academisation can be achieved in more than one way (Hartelius, 2005). Applying his description to a military case, we can, archetypically, distinguish between two variants of academisation. Academisation can be grounded in research on military practices and experiences. It can then promote professionalisation, in the sense that officers’ professional performance is based on expert knowledge, continuously developed through research and reflexive analysis. Elzinga (1990) has created a typology with four stages in the development towards professionalisation:

1. Experience-based practice with no formal requirements
2. Semi-professionalisation; certain regulation of practice, prior knowledge requirements and ethical principles
3. Technification / “pre-scientification”; incorporation of scientific knowledge, establishment of undergraduate academic programs, different career paths emerge
4. Professionalisation; research in professional practice, establishment of doctoral programs and new career paths based wholly or partly on scientific work and scientific training.

Another possibility is that academisation is not rooted in research on military practice, but, rather, that the educational content moves towards theories and generalised abstractions in order to achieve the legitimacy traditionally awarded to an academic degree. Officers would, in this case, undergo an “academic education,” but without professional expertise being developed by officers researching and developing professional practice. The primary aim would not, in this latter case, be the achievement of knowledge and expertise, but rather the status of the occupational group. An “invasion of academics” (Hartelius, 2005) would serve the aim to make the educational programme sufficiently academic (that is, provide the faculty with the right ratio of professors, PhDs or similar) in order for it to be approved by the reviewing authority. This latter case seems to be a possible interpretation of the “NDC critique” by Alvinus et al. (2020), according to which the effort to academise has caused the curriculum to diverge from professional practices.

It is relevant to ask which aspects of the military organisation's complex and varied skills and knowledge needs are most easily academised. Which components of what Boëne (2000) calls the military's "logic of external conflict," derived from the archetype of infantry combat, are appropriate for academisation? In major Western countries like the United States and Britain, the bulk of junior officer training is practical, character-building and formulated to instil discipline. Military education more akin to academic studies is attended by American and British officers later in their professional life, often with an emphasis on planning, staff and management work – practices characterised by what Boëne (2000, p. 10) calls "the logic of internal cooperation." The working life of a military officer is often multifaceted, because the military organisation is highly complex with a number of different internal areas of expertise and multiple logics of action.

This last point has not, so far, formed a frequent subject of military studies. Despite considerable interest in war within various social sciences, there are few studies on the inner workings of modern military organisations, least of all for the navy and air force. Where armed forces have been studied as employers or institutions hosting conscripted soldiers, we see standard organisational psychology applied to the military; to the extent that there are detailed studies of military organisations, these commonly deal with ground combat units (see, for example, King, 2013). It goes without saying that while, for instance, submarine crews, air force mechanics and infantry soldiers certainly can display some similarities, there are vast differences in terms of working procedures, interaction patterns, the meaning ascribed to military rank, etc.

In the final part of this chapter, I will present a model for further analysis of organisational differences within armed forces of industrialised democracies, furthering the argument that it can be greatly misleading to depart from the assumption that all military officers belong to a single, uniform profession. Different officer categories develop different skill sets and operate within different logics of action, while on occasion switching between positions with varying degrees of professional content.

Conceptualising Different Logics of Action in Military Organisations

Theorising about the multifaceted nature of the military organisation can be traced back to the debate between Huntington and Janowitz. In *The Soldier and the State*, Huntington (1957) propounded a unique, eternal professional military (warrior) ideal that he believed differed fundamentally from the instrumental and individualistic orientation characteristic of modernity. In *The Professional Soldier*, Janowitz (1960), on the other hand, put forward his convergence theory – a prediction about a narrowing of cultural and epistemic differences between the

military and civilian organisations in society. For Janowitz, the military is a social system with skills requirements dynamically changing in relation to varying conditions and needs: technological and administrative renewal produces new skill requirements. The focus in both these classic texts, largely equating the development of officer professionalism with development of the military organisation, was the officer corps.

Janowitz (1960) showed that the officer’s traditional warrior role (or identity) had been supplemented by two modern officer categories: the military administrator and the military technologist. Linked to these new roles, more instrumental perspectives on military professional dedication developed over time with many officers having, for example, entered the military in order to receive paid training, discovering that military professional skills had civil applications, and subsequently anticipating a career change or comparing their financial conditions with those of other occupational groups. Moskos (1977) discusses both individual motivations and the system-level consequences of the military moving from an institutional to an individualistic orientation; Harries-Jenkins and Moskos (1981) discuss a possible development towards two parallel military institutions: one military elite-oriented, another more civilianised. In an example taken from the army, fighting units (mechanised, ranger and other ground combat units), characterised by traditional Spartan warrior ideals, were gradually becoming increasingly different from the culture of the surrounding civilian society. Military units whose tasks were primarily logistics, support, engineering or communications, meanwhile, were increasingly converging with the rest of society in skills and norms, interaction patterns, and in the orientation of personnel to work (Moskos, 1977).

A related, contemporary, contribution came in the form of Thomas’s (1981) description of two subsystems in modern military organisations: the first the *operative* one with a focus on the application of possibly violent force and whose primary rationality is ethical; deriving legitimacy from its task, the thinking is holistic, qualitative and absolute, within the framework of a close-knit collective with a command structure and a militarily distinctive warrior identity. The second subsystem is *administrative*. Its purpose is to ensure well-functioning exchange relationships, internally and externally; its thinking is instrumental, quantitative and calculative. Conflicts between goals, careful consideration and negotiation are natural features due to organisational complexity. Compromises and a degree of vagueness are accepted as unavoidable. This subsystem’s culture is similar to that of a large civilian company or a government agency. The typical identities are expert and administrator. The two subsystems are different functionally and culturally rather than structurally. Hence, Thomas, unlike Harries-Jenkins and Moskos (1981), does not classify various types of military units into the respective

subsystems, instead holding that both subsystems are represented in all military units, even if their relationship and ratio vary greatly depending on the unit and task in question.

Boëne (2000) further develops Thomas's model. Across the military's organisational units there exists a dialectic between the capacity for using violence and the need for well-functioning cooperative and exchange relationships. For Boëne, these are two logics of collective action: *the logic of external conflict* and *the logic of internal cooperation* (the equivalents of Thomas's two subsystems). The term "logic" does not imply logical necessity or any degree of cleverness; it simply denotes the beliefs according to which an organisation operates. Boëne holds that the logics of conflict and cooperation are contradictory and mutually restricting but nevertheless present in all military organising; their ratios change over time and according to task, technology, and the level of organisation.

The logic of external conflict is grounded in the military organisation's primary area of use: the application of lethal force against an enemy. The logic is shaped by the fundamental problem of collective action in combat:

Acceptance of fate, providence, or the fortunes of war, as well as the sacredness of mission and honour ... are central parts of that logic [while] assessment of the outcome of action is difficult to measure in terms other than qualitative and holistic: the enemy's will to continue fighting has been broken, or it has not. With lives on the line, ideals absolute, taboos transgressed, cohesion and discipline overriding concerns, fate uncertain and qualitative success as the yardstick of effectiveness, this first logic of action is pure military uniqueness. (Boëne 2000, p. 10; see also King, 2013)

Group cohesion, the will to self-sacrifice, discipline, obedience, valour and honour, constitute the main elements of the logic of external conflict. The same qualities are also discussed by Dandeker:

The individual must be willing to subordinate him or herself to the common good – the team and the common task. Furthermore, there must be a willingness to sacrifice one's life for the team ... if necessary, coercion may be required. This is what makes military discipline – an effective structure of command for the giving and receiving of orders – quite different from other organizations in terms of the demands it places upon personnel. ... They are obliged to train to kill and to sacrifice self. (Dandeker, 1999, p. 85)

According to Boëne (2000), the logic of external conflict is, in its purest form, found in what he calls “primitive” warfare in which the soldier comes face to face with the enemy. Such situations require the soldier to conquer their fear of death and to be prepared to break social taboos by killing people, even at close range.

Boëne believes that the logic of external conflict’s link to the mortal danger of combat makes it both militarily unique and essentially value-oriented. As a result, it differs entirely from the goal-oriented, calculative approach of modern organisations. An administrative logic (what Boëne calls the logic of internal cooperation) can also be found in the modern military organisation, which he understands to be

oriented to friendly agents or agencies in charge of co-ordination and support functions, be they internal (HQ staff, combat support, service support) or external, to the military (society, civilian organizations). It is a logic of co-operation. Its influence increases in proportion to the reliance on external support. ... This second logic, when it is pure, does not in any way deviate from industrial forms of sociability, which today means that uniqueness is nil. (Boëne 2000, p. 10)

The logic of internal cooperation is shaped by conduct towards non-hostile actors both within and without the military organisation – a mode of conduct not designed for the use of violence against an enemy but for the creation of functioning exchange relations and legitimacy. Since the conditions for coordination are completely different from those on the battlefield, coordination is achieved with other means. The logic of internal cooperation exists in all complex modern organisations, both civilian and military. The explanations for this lie in both the military organisation and in the growth of the democratic nation state with civilian control over the military.

Like Janowitz (1960), Boëne (2000) holds that this logic becomes increasingly prominent following the military organisation’s greater need for outside support and increasing internal specialisation, mainly driven by technological advance. As a result of developments in weapons and information technology, as well as in the growth of a large military bureaucracy, the military organisation today has a greater degree of specialisation and logic of internal cooperation compared to the pre-modern army. With the introduction of staff functions and expert positions, the command and obedience relationships are more complicated vis-à-vis a traditional linear hierarchy. In combat, too, the more technology-intensive military units are characterised more by the logic of internal cooperation – firstly because technology often enables force to be applied further away from the ene-

my, and, secondly, because the extent to which interactions are organised through technological means is greater than in the infantry squad.

A logic of action can be more or less supported by empirical facts: since no organisational structure or task is fully determined by any logic of external conflict, a logic of action should not be seen as a purely functional response to any “objective” task requirements and is, rather, best understood as an artefact of culture and organisation. Tamir and Kunda (1988) illustrate this using examples taken from fighting in the Golan Heights in 1973. Both the Israeli and the Syrian tank crews operated in similar hierarchical units (tank battalions), equipped with comparable technology (tanks) but based on different logics of external conflict, manifested in their actions during the battle. While the Syrian tank commanders sat protected in their tanks, hatch closed, their Israeli counterparts stood up, hatch open. In the Syrian tanks, only the tank commanders listened to the command and control net; in the Israeli tanks, all crew members listened to both the internal net and the command and control net. The Syrian tank commanders had a clearly defined mission, which they alone knew. If one of the tank commanders died, none of his crew members knew what the mission was. In Israeli tanks, information about the mission was continually distributed to all the tank crew members, and if a tank commander was killed, the mission could continue.

A collective logic of action constitutes an *institutional order*: an established system of ideas about the relationship between actors and effects, which dominates during a given period (Czarniawska, 2000). Consider infantry combat. Its collective logic of action undergoes a radical change as a result of the industrialisation of war. The traditional, geometric mass assault is made practically suicidal by the increased rate and greater accuracy of fire (the machine gun being a prime example), which forces soldiers to spread out and take cover, thus, in turn, making it much more difficult to coordinate and achieve collective action (Abrahamsson, 1971; King 2013).

Harries-Jenkins and Moskos (1981) point out that Janowitz’s convergence theory was, in part, based on peacetime conditions and that it is possible for an individual to have dual military occupational identities. An officer can have one occupational identity (administrator) in peacetime and another (warrior) during an operation. Soeters (2000) provides a related intersection at the organisation level. He likens modern military organisations to the two faces of the Roman god Janus, with the double nature comprising the *cold* and the *hot* military organisation, a metaphor borrowed from firefighting units. Cold military organisation designates organisation in non-dangerous situations. Soeters mentions two kinds of contexts, the first of which is administrative:

The managing organization at headquarters...closely resembles an ordinary office organization. ... In this organization one could say the white-collar work (although in uniform) is being done. (Soeters 2000, p. 473)

The other kind of context involves training, exercises, and routine, non-dangerous missions:

The “only” thing one has to do in the garrison, in the barracks, and on routine sailing missions is constantly make preparations for the worst case: train, exercise, maintain the force, and simply be there. (Soeters 2000, p. 473) ²

For Soeters, “hot” military organisation refers to military units engaged in battle or doing other highly dangerous work. In these situations, the organisation and the environmental conditions place special demands on coordination and also managing fear and emotions; it is known to actors

when they are on the battlefield, in crisis, or in disaster – in sum, when they are in conditions that are turbulent and potentially life threatening ... Hot conditions occur when the heat is on, when members have to perform in critical, dangerous, violent, ambiguous, and hence stressful circumstances ... [The] hot organization is built around flexible groups having all the characteristics of either the (“one leader”) simple structure or – when explicitly based on self-managing – the adhocracy. ... Leadership in the hot organization should definitely be something more than conventional linear and cognitive behaviour. It should contain emotional aspects as well, such as courage, fear control, and compassion. (Soeters 2000, p. 474)

There is analytical potential in combining Boëne’s two collective logics of action with the twin organisation concepts offered by Soeters. Boëne’s logics of collective action and Soeters’s classifications of “hot” and “cold” organisation all capture differences in military organisation, but along slightly different demarcation lines. Boëne’s two collective logics of action can exist both in “cold” peacetime conditions and in “hot” and highly dangerous military missions. By way of con-

2 According to Soeters, low-intensity peacekeeping operations (Cyprus and Sinai are the examples given) can also be regarded as a variation of cold organization; or “predominantly fairly cold” (Soeters, 2000, p. 473).

crete examples, military organisations, as a rule, conduct combat training, where soldiers and commanders learn how they must act in combat situations. In other words, a certain collective logic of external conflict is reproduced. Such training is generally conducted in peacetime, with varying degrees of realism and based on actual war experiences to widely differing degrees.

The “cold” logic of external conflict conveyed in combat training is an artefact of organisation not necessarily tested in a real-life combat operation. Correspondingly, peacetime staff and command exercises (often without any actual units to lead) reproduce a certain logic of internal cooperation. Media training is done in order to train military officers for future interactions with journalists, and so on. These two different peacetime logics of collective action are matched by their “real-life” counterparts: those present in actual military operations. To illustrate, Figure 2 below contains some examples of organisation in their respective quadrant.

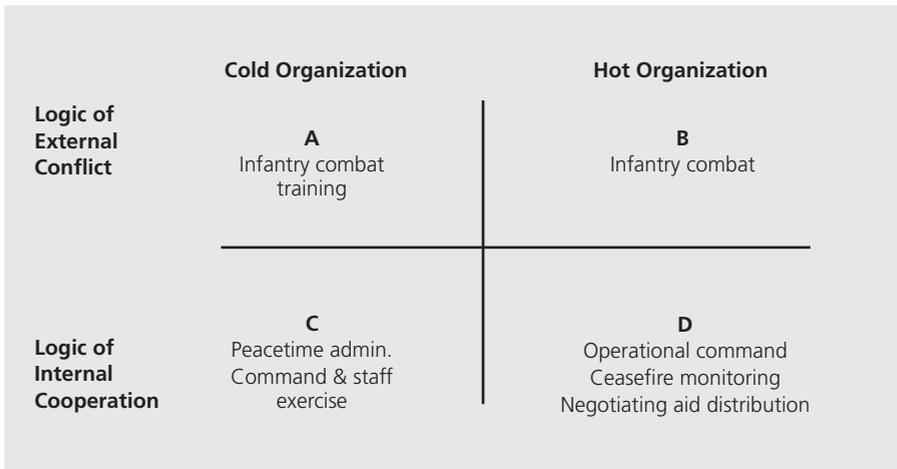


Figure 2. Military organisation as a product of two different collective logics of action and various organisational conditions (A, B, C, D) and some examples.

The “cold organisation” logic of external conflict is shaped by, and expressed in, the description of combat reproduced in officer and soldier combat training. Its relation to the “hot organisation” logic of external conflict (i.e., the relationship between A and B) should be regarded as an open question. Because there is no enemy trying to blow you up during combat training, and because you do not have to kill any actual enemies, key components of actual combat are missing. What remains is a simulation where actions can be decoupled from their most extreme consequences. Certain military units learn from real-life missions through simulated combat training by, for example, having combat-experienced personnel design and carry

out the preparatory combat training where they convey their experiences. In other units, there is less experiential learning, and here the reproduced logics can be based more on assumptions and dogma than on accumulated knowledge of actual events. Borell (1989) relates how advocates of an established logic of external conflict can even resist “learning lessons” from actual war experiences.

The logic of internal cooperation is permeated by a rationality similar to that found in public administration or private corporations. It is shaped by technological development, societal norms and the military’s need for legitimacy in the eyes of society with regard to, for example, rational decision structures, quality, equality or cost-effectiveness. The difference between “hot” and “cold” can be described as a distinction between negotiation or leadership in true military missions and activities being performed in staff and command exercises.

While peacetime administration indeed creates real consequences and differentiates itself, in this respect, from many exercises, it is, according to the classification of Soeters (2000), an instance of “cold” organisation. “Hot” organisation only applies to units facing mortal danger: highly dangerous, dynamic, ambiguous situations in which units develop distinctive cultural codes and ways of coordination. More often than not, they also operate in the borderland of, or outside, the formal rules and regulations. Hence, Soeters’s concept is entirely different from the calculative administrative machinery that characterises leadership even during real-life mission command. It is frequently emphasised that objectivity, logic and taking stock are what higher hierarchical levels should bring to even real-life missions. Therefore, in this context, the meaning of “hot” should not be interpreted as synonymous with the logic of external conflict.

Lanir, Fischhoff and Johnson (1988) point out that fighting is frequently characterised by chaos, ambiguity and fear. In their opinion, the way to create functional order on the battlefield has very little in common with the risk calculations and instrumental rationality of leadership. Operating on the battlefield is about situational presence, impressions, experience and boldness. These great qualities can rarely be verbalised or quantified (in, for example, a “combat effectiveness” percentage) in those optimisation models of staff which have come to permeate military leadership through operational and systems analysis.

The model can tentatively encourage an analysis of various activities in the military organisation relating to whether they can be analytically assigned to one (or more) of the four quadrants and the relationships between them. It can be stated that a military organisation, especially one in a democratic nation, inevitably needs to be able to manage activities in all four quadrants and that well-functioning relationships between activities in different quadrants are highly beneficial. The two left-hand quadrants constitute, in terms of size, by far the

biggest part of the organisation. They are also prerequisites for the military's legitimacy and its ability to develop skills systems and other operating conditions; frequently, they are arenas where there is friction between line and staff (for example), demonstrating that even in relatively calm situations, interorganisational dynamics can be turbulent. The two right-half quadrants represent the contexts in which developed abilities are put to the test in real-life situations, regardless of whether it is a firefight, naval warfare or ceasefire negotiations. It is here that the organisational units' full potential to solve the main task is used. All four logics of action thus have their *raison d'être* – but it is important to understand their respective “content” as well as the differences and potential tensions between them. Once again, it is worth stressing that the term “logic of action” does not imply a sufficient degree of competence. To what extent a certain activity is characterised by actual competence is a question for further research.

The model can help formulate hypotheses or questions. In the case of “teeth units” or staffs, for example, one can examine the respective logic of action's relationship between exercises and simulations and real-life situations (A–B and C–D) as well as the mutual relationship between both logics of action regarding exercises and real-life missions (A–C and B–D). In a customarily unhostile country like modern Sweden, it can be expected that a large percentage of the military organisation's personnel spend most of their time in the lower quadrant of the left half of the model. What consequences does this have for the overall function of the military organisation? What is the impact of actual operations on resource allocation, career trajectories and organisational development?

Concluding Remarks

This chapter has argued for an increased focus on various manifestations of military professionalism, thus de-emphasising broad and unspecific, perhaps spurious, claims relating to profession status. Modern armed forces are technologically advanced, complex organisations and this greatly affects military personnel, officers among them. While they certainly share similarities, on balance it is generally more helpful to consider army, navy and air force officers as related professions rather than as members of a single, uniform military profession. With the considerable resources typically made available for military training and education, it should be possible to make substantial progress in the development of military professionalism. That, however, requires paying more attention to actual military practices, including an increased emphasis on empirical studies in army, navy and air force contexts.

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8. The Military Profession under Pressure

Morten Brender

On 23 May, the Danish Minister of Defence, Trine Bramsen of the centre-left Social Democrats, announced a thorough shake-up of the Danish Armed Forces (Svendsen, 2020). The initiative followed a number of scandals involving the misuse of power, the fraudulent appropriation of public money and nepotism that had haunted the ministry; the minister's reaction thus seemed to align with recurring accusations in media and political discussions about the “rotten” or “sick” culture in the Danish Armed Forces (Boel, 2020; Hildebrandt, 2020).

The case, raising questions both about the character of a military culture described as “rotten” and the ways in which a conflict between the political establishment and the military community can be meaningfully analysed, is illustrative for the topic of this chapter. To answer these questions, I will use the study of military professions. I will do so by first introducing the two main approaches to such a study, the classical functionalist and the neo-Weberian, and then by showing the forms a critique of the military might take following each of these approaches. Finally, I will advocate an inclusive approach, and argue that instead of describing the relation between the political domain and the military professions in terms of insurmountable opposites, we should focus on understanding why such dichotomies prevail; if we regard a particular world view as inherently incompatible with our own even before we start examining it, we enter the field of study blinkered. The overall questions I seek to answer in the following are, firstly, “What is a mil-

itary profession?” and secondly “How can we study military professions?” When addressing these questions, it is worth noting that I concede – in line with recent contributions to this field of research (Segal & de Angelis, 2009; Libel, 2019) – that instead of talking about a military profession in the singular, we should instead recognise that there exists a plurality of professions, and, moreover, that our approach to the study of any one of these may not adequately fit the study of them all.

What are the Military Professions?

Professions are occupations. Sam Sarkesian and Robert E. Conner (2006, pp. 21ff) identify six specific characteristics differentiating professions from occupations of other kinds; in the case of the military professions, we might interpret these thus:

1. The military profession is founded on expert knowledge.
2. Members of the military profession acquire that knowledge through an educational system set in place for that purpose.
3. The military profession has a social function, and the members fulfil that function without expecting specific benefits.
4. The profession has set norms defining the conduct of professionals and defining its relation to society at large.
5. The profession is set within an institutional framework.
6. The profession has its own system of assessing the quality of professional conduct and recruitment of new members to the professions.

Obviously, the criteria in this list remain quite abstract. It is worth noticing, however, that the list includes both actual characteristics, focusing on how professions are different (the first and fourth items, for instance) and processes set in place to maintain that differentiation (the second and sixth). This accords with the notably influential definition of Freidson (1999), which also highlights both characteristics (a monopoly of theoretical and practical knowledge) on the one hand, and procedures (access to the profession) on the other. In the following, I will address the origins and significance of these two main aspects in the study of the military profession. In other words, I will first focus on the actual characteristics, often referred to as the profession’s expertise – a notion associated with the functionalist approach. Following that, I will focus on the perceived characteristics in place to secure the profession’s position through what is referred to as processes of *social closure* – a notion associated with the neo-Weberian approach.

Professions – The Functionalist Approach

Most descriptions of the study of the military profession start in the late 1950s with the publication of Samuel P. Huntington's *The Soldier and the State* (1957) and Morris Janowitz's *The Professional Soldier* (1960). There are many good reasons for this; first and foremost, these two books addressed the overall question "What characterises military professionalism?" in a systematic fashion, and with a precision, previously unseen. (Rones, 2015). Accepting this as the starting point for the study of the military profession, however, it is easy to overlook two other important facts. First, although these two publications were unique with regard to the methodical nature of their inquiry, we should not underestimate the importance of other relevant studies of the nature of military professionalism. Secondly, when looking at what is perhaps the most important example of these other studies – Samuel A. Stouffer and colleagues' 1949 *Studies in Social Psychology in World War II* published in the wake of the Second World War – it becomes clear that Huntington and Janowitz presuppose a very particular, exclusive, notion of what a profession is and is not.

Huntington (1957) and Janowitz (1960) describe the military profession in the singular. In their view, the officer corps constitutes the backbone of the armed forces – a notion that seems to have been adopted by the military establishment in the United States (U.S. Army, 2010; Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2012; Li, Krueger, Hanser, Naber & LaValley, 2017). Even if we accept this – if we assume, for example, that a highly specialised theoretical knowledge is one of the hallmarks of a true profession – we should still recognise that this has important consequences for what we see, and, perhaps more importantly, what we do *not* see. Thus, leaving out the enlisted men in general, and the NCO-corps in particular, deprives us of an important, and potentially very different, perspective on military professions (Segal & de Angelis, 2009).

The unilateral focus on the officer corps is due to the fact that Huntington and Janowitz were writing at the height of structural functionalism (Segal & de Angelis 2009). Structural functionalism is often ascribed to one of the most influential sociologists of that time, Talcott Parsons, according to whom professions play a role, fulfilling a function, in society at large (Møller, 2019). This is of course true of all occupations and can be seen to result from the general distribution of labour in complex societies. Unlike other occupations, however, Parsons (1954) – and with him Janowitz and, especially, Huntington – claim that professions fulfil their functions in a particular way. And by doing so, professions are crucial in ensuring that the societal whole is larger than the sum of its parts.

Professional Norms as Social Glue

Unlike other occupations, a profession is characterised by a specialised theoretical knowledge and, perhaps most importantly, a set of ethical norms concerning how that knowledge should translate into practice. The most obvious example is the Hippocratic Oath taken by physicians, a clear demonstration of the twofold purpose of such norms. By stating that the purpose of the profession is to serve the greater good, these norms guard society against the danger of both public and private vices: physicians owe their allegiance to the profession and, through that, to society rather than to any particular government or its policies; accordingly, they are expected to refuse to pursue partisan interests violating the common good with reference to that oath. And they are likewise bound by the standards of the oath as individuals: they may use their knowledge for the benefit of their own career, but only within the confines set by the norms of their profession. As long as they stick to these norms, individual rewards may be won to the benefit of all. If they violate them for the sake of personal profit, however, they can no longer be regarded as true members of the profession (Parsons, 1954). Something very similar can be said in regard to the officer. When we talk about military ethics, we tend to refer to *jus in bello* standards applying specifically to the conduct of war (Walzer, 2000). Yet, like physicians, officers have also been seen traditionally as gatekeepers of social norms. The most well-known example of such a norm is probably Article 133 of the US Uniform Code of Military Justice, addressing “Conduct unbecoming of an officer and a gentleman” (UCMJ). While what is included in such “conduct” varies, the statement nevertheless clearly illustrates that the standards an officer is expected to follow exceeds those of the commission in itself. In that light, it is not surprising that becoming an officer requires more than just military training. It implies education, or what Germans refer to as *Bildung* (Jansen, Brænder & Moelker, 2019). And for that reason, members of traditional professions such as physicians, priests, judges and officers command a respect that goes beyond that of the mere occupational function they fulfil.

To return to Huntington and Janowitz, it is for this reason that both focus on the officer rather than the enlisted majority, and why Huntington emphasises that officers should be role models to the society they serve: “The expertise of the officer imposes upon him a special social responsibility. The employment of his expertise promiscuously for his own advantage would wreck the fabric of society. As with the practice of medicine, society insists that the management of violence be utilized only for socially approved purposes” (Huntington, 1957, p. 14). The keyword in the quote above is “expertise.” The expertise is specific. It implies a clearly defined domain or jurisdiction, a high degree of theoretical knowledge

and a very nuanced practical knowledge. Thus seen, the expertise also concerns both the ability to transform theoretical insights into concrete actions and the professional's awareness of certain norms, ensuring that things are done in accordance with professional standards.

Profession and Society: A Delicate Interdependency

Following the description above, professions and modern society are fundamentally interdependent. Providing norms that tie society together, the profession plays a crucial role in maintaining that society – but society is itself a prerequisite for the functioning of the profession. The maintenance of the professions' knowledge, practise and values depends on the existence of a stable social order within which they can function.

It is, however, worth remembering that the works of Huntington and Janowitz were written in light of the fact that the apparently concordant relationship between professions and society at large – between Huntington's *Soldier* and *State* – was drastically changing in the late 1950s. Written shortly before the start of the Vietnam War, the two works came to represent opposite positions in regard to preserving the draft, an institution finally abandoned in 1973 when the war was itself coming to an end. Huntington and Janowitz, then, did not merely describe the state of things; they also suggested, in light of ongoing changes, the future shape of the relationship between the armed forces and society.

One reason why the balance between the soldier and the state shifted in the late 1950 – perhaps, indeed, why such change is apparently continual – is that the relationship between the military professions and society is fundamentally ambivalent. On the one hand, as we have seen, society and its professions are mutually dependent; on the other, their overall purposes or functions can also be seen as mutually exclusive. This relation between professions and society at large is subject to constant rivalry. Each profession adheres to its own values. It can only fulfil its purpose at the expense of the values characterising other professions and society at large.

Nowhere is this ambivalence more visible than in the relation between the armed forces and the state. “The war made the state, and the state made war” (Tilly, 1975, p. 42). Historically seen, the modern state is a product of armed conflicts. Its core characteristics – organised taxes, healthcare, education, social welfare, transports and communication infrastructure, and its organisational bureaucracy – can all be ascribed to processes of optimisation, developed in fierce competition with other states and with other social entities such as the Church, the nobility and trade organisations (Elias 1969; Mann, 1986–2012). Likewise,

modern military institutions have found their form and organisation within the framework of the state. This means that it is difficult to conceive of conflicts in ways other than as the monopolised and organised form of violence, vested in the power of state-controlled military institutions. The state is defined by its monopoly on violence (Weber, 1919, p. 4). Part of that monopoly is delegated to the military profession, the officer corps overseeing the “management of violence,” which, according to Huntington (1957), is the function of the military profession.

The State and the Professions: The Challenge of Striking a New Balance

Over time, the balance between state and profession may shift and must, therefore, be renegotiated (Gibson & Snider, 1999; Snider, 2000; Snider, Oh, & Toner, 2009; Sarkesian & Connor, 2006). And if the relation has become very asymmetrical – if the military gains too much power, for example (Gibson & Snider, 1999) – that process is not always straightforward. This can happen if society and military become over-integrated or if the military gains too high a degree of autonomy; in this case the military will directly control state institutions. It can also happen if the military holds a de facto knowledge monopoly, in which case the state depends on military expertise to make strategic decisions only the military establishment can accomplish. While we may often associate the dominance of the military profession with authoritarian regimes, the threats related to the knowledge monopoly of the armed forces have been recognised in Western democracies at least since President Eisenhower’s farewell address in 1961, in which he highlighted the problems of the power vested in the “military-industrial complex.”

The balance can also shift the other way, in favour of society; in this case, governing institutions no longer recognise, or do not prioritise, the needs of the armed forces. 30 years ago, Charles Krauthammer famously stated: “American pre-eminence is based on the fact that it is the only country with the military, diplomatic, military and economic assets to be a decisive player in any conflict in whatever part of the world it chooses to involve itself” (Krauthammer, 1991, p. 24). This statement is still true – at least in comparison to its Western allies; the proportion of GDP allocated to military expenditure is very low in the EU region, for instance. There is probably more than one reason for this. Everything spent on military equipment and personnel is money that cannot be spent on more popular issues such as welfare, education or health. Moreover, EU countries may currently have little incentive to invest large sums in military institutions: the extremely strong economic position of the Union ensures that non-European companies have a strong incentive to comply with EU rules in order to gain access to the single market. In this way, EU rules become the gold standard for foreign companies – a fact that

enables the Union to push through European policies far more effectively than it would through more direct means (Bradford 2020).

The Conflict between the Political Establishment and the Armed Forces: A Functionalist Interpretation

From a functionalist point of view, we can understand the tension between the political establishment and the armed forces in Denmark as a concrete example of the conflict of interests lurking between the state and the military professions. The state pursues an economic logic, according to which money cannot be spent twice; when managing state-founded institutions, therefore, the state needs to ensure that it gets value for money and that each institution works as efficiently as possible. The armed forces, on the other hand, seek to fulfil the purpose of the military professions – that is, the management of violence (if we look specifically at the officer corps), and countering external threats (if we look at the professions in general). Traditionally, the military profession's (or professions') main criterion for success has been effective security, not economic efficiency. But security does not have a price tag. It costs what it costs. As long as the state cannot ignore the prevalence of threats, it must also prioritise security and may have to overlook procedures not complying with its other considerations. When, however, the economic logic becomes all-pervasive and security issues less urgent, cracking down on such apparently aberrant professional practises becomes a way to increase state control.

Norms and their Loss

We have seen how functionalists understand professional norms to bind society together. The notion that there is a close relationship between the maintenance of society and the sustaining and prevailing norms can be ascribed to the founder of functionalism, Émile Durkheim.

Durkheim highlighted that individuals can, especially in times of rapid social change, encounter situations they experience as anomic, characterised by a total loss of social norms. Former standards no longer apply, and new standards are not yet in place to replace them. Social transitions challenge prevailing norms (Durkheim, 1964). With this in mind, we can also understand how professional norms are subject to social change – which is useful in explaining the conflict between the political establishment and the military professions.

When Huntington (1957) aligns the officer with the physician, he does so

because they both adhere to norms that differentiate their conduct from that of other occupations. Members of the classical professions – physicians, priests and judges – apply their expertise on domains associated with life and death. The same can be said of the officer, who through his virtuous management of violence ensures the survival of society by visiting death on its enemies. Norms are crucial in regard to the role all true professions play in society at large. We expect high standards from professionals. Moreover, norms are also crucial when members of the profession act as professionals: expertise is not just a matter of knowing what your goals are, or knowing how to reach them, but knowing how to reach them correctly. It is perhaps for this reason that a focus on norms constitutes the dominant view in studies of the military professions, either heralding how norms help in maintaining high professional standards or bemoaning how the loss of normative or ethical standards has led to the decay of the military profession (Snider, Nagl, & Pfaff, 1999; Rockwood, 2005; Kohn, 2009; Snider, Oh, & Toner, 2009; Snider, 2000, 2008; Box, 2012; Clark, 2016, Crosbie & Kleykamp, 2018).

The military professions are distinguished by the legitimising of the transgression of norms that we would elsewhere regard as part and parcel of social order – the prohibition of killing and the obligation of self-preservation. As with the economic costs, this unique characteristic can be maintained as long as the overall function of the military professions – to protect society against external threats – prevails. When this is no longer the case, however, outsiders will find it increasingly difficult to accept such exceptions; instead of being seen as heroes or martyrs, soldiers then will be viewed as perpetrators or victims. They will find themselves lost between the norms of society and the norms of the profession, and their ability to cope with criticism from the outside will depend on the support they can expect from the inside.

The Neo-Weberian Approach

Although Huntington and Janowitz both studied military professionalism, beginning with similar functionalist principles and focusing similarly on the officer corps, they did not reach the same conclusions about the profession's role in society. For Huntington (1957), the military should provide an *example* for society; in accordance with the functionalist idea of differentiation described above. In other words, he saw military professionalism as a bulwark against the threats of individualism and political partisanship. Janowitz (1960), conversely, emphasised that the military should *resemble* society; this way it would be precluded from becoming a state within the state. The difference can be ascribed to the two authors' different disciplinary starting points (Rukavishnikov & Pugh, 2006), or, with reference

to Durkheim, be seen as their subscribing to different views of solidarity – “social glue.” Janowitz (1960) advocates a *mechanic* view, according to which social cohesion is guaranteed by similarity; Huntington (1957) advocates an *organic* view, according to which social cohesion is guaranteed by difference. Accordingly, the different conclusions reached by Janowitz and Huntington reflect fundamentally different perspectives on the relation between society at large and the social sub-systems we know as professions. This is important because, as we shall see below, the neo-Weberian approach to the sociology of professions focuses precisely on how that relation is maintained.

From Social Structure to Social Actor

Whereas functionalism can be ascribed to Durkheim, Weberianism is ultimately derived from another founder of the discipline of sociology, Max Weber. When analysing the role of professions, this means that we now turn our focus from the structural level to that of the actor, and from the actual to the perceived differences between the characteristics defining professions, and to the mechanisms maintaining such perceptions.

This shift of focus is important for two reasons. First, structural explanations sometimes resort to the ecological fallacy – the incorrect extrapolation of results from one set to another. As this error is licensed by a failure to recognise important and subtle details, we are less likely to commit it if we keep a keen eye on the context – as, indeed, an actor perspective encourages us to do. Secondly, an actor perspective affords us a qualitatively different way of explaining observed patterns and opens a venue for explanations that would not arise had we pursued a wholly structural approach.

To illustrate the latter, remember that the conflict between state and profession is, as we have seen above, the result of clashing functionalist interests, where the state’s focus on economics stands in the way of the military profession’s focus on security. A conflict of interests may still arise, however, even in situations where military funding is available. Thus, in spite of the fact that the former U.S. Defence Secretary Robert S. McNamara constantly increased military spending and that his successor Melvin R. Laird cut defence budgets significantly, the top brass detested the former and embraced the latter. According to James Q. Wilson (1989), this was because McNamara tried to micromanage the professions while Laird allowed the military to decide itself where to make cuts. While funding is an important element in the conflict of interests between the profession and the state, the most important struggle is, then, the struggle for professional autonomy. This is the struggle in focus in the neo-Weberian approach.

Where the key concept in the functionalist approach is *expertise*, with its theoretical, practical and ethical implications, the corresponding key concept in the neo-Weberian approach is *social closure* (Abbott, 1988; Wedeen, 2002). Social closure defines the mechanism set in place to ensure that a profession can retain its status. This certainly does not mean that expertise is irrelevant. As mentioned above, the six defining traits of the military profession identified by Sarkesian and Connor (2006) address both the characteristics serving to differentiate the profession and the procedures set in place to facilitate that differentiation.

The point is that the building blocks of expertise – knowledge, practice and ethics – only become relevant when they are used as social markers to set a profession apart; in other words, what counts in the relationship between professions and society are not only the actual differences or the actual autonomy of the profession, but how these differences are perceived by the social actors. For this reason, what now comes into focus is identity, including the establishment of binary us/them-relations, motivation and, especially, the ways in which actual or imaginary differences are articulated.

From Institution to Occupation

Traditionally, the study of military professions has focused more on expertise than on social closure, and in some instances has even rejected the relevance of a neo-Weberian approach altogether (Aselius, 2011). However, one of the most influential analytical frameworks in military sociology – the distinction made by Charles C. Moskos (1977) between what he describes as members of, respectively, an institution and an occupation (the I/O model) – can be seen as entailing some of the key elements characterising the neo-Weberian approach, and, as we shall see below, it has certainly been used in the process of establishing social closure.

In the wake of the cancellation of the draft in America, Moskos predicted that the military profession would now leave what he describes as the *institutional* model and instead move towards an *occupational* model (1977). Institutions are professions. Members of institutions are driven by what we would refer to as intrinsic motivation – a calling (Ryan & Deci 2000). They serve because they perceive their work to be its own reward. Members of occupations, on the contrary, are driven by what we would refer to as extrinsic motivation – they serve because of what the work will return in remuneration or privilege. Ultimately, the efforts afforded by members of an occupation are the result of a utilitarian cost benefit-analysis.

Often, the difference between institution and occupation is depicted as a qualitative difference, or, as referred to above, as an insurmountable leap. Giuseppe Caforio (1988), for instance, reiterates Moskos's model, openly differenti-

ating between the “professional” and the “manager,” an interpretation that has later been repeated by Marina Nuciari (1994) and Don M. Snider (2015). And, as mentioned in the introduction, when politicians vent their frustrations about the “sick” or “rotten” culture of the military, they also seem to see the two sets of values – the values of the institution and the values of the occupation, respectively – as mutually exclusive. The problem is of course that a view based on absolutes inevitably implies the negation of its opposite. Seen from the perspective of the political establishment, if the culture of the military institution is sick or rotten, the obvious implication is that society should be freed from it. From the perspective of the military the reverse is true: Management is incompatible with true professionalism. This is a view, however, that leads us to forget that soldiers are also managers. Not only in the sense that they are “managers of violence,” but because military leaders – above a certain level, at least – spend most of their time leading organisations, just like managers elsewhere in the public sector.

Although Moskos’ (1977) framework is extremely useful as an analytical model, the notion that the military professions will dissolve into mere occupations is very unlikely. Not simply because it would fundamentally challenge soldiers’ self-understanding (soldiers fighting for extrinsic reasons alone are what we normally refer to as mercenaries); but also because it can be rejected empirically. There is no reason to doubt that the motivation of soldiers changes over time. In his Vietnam War study of 1971, Moskos underlined how observations made during the Second World War no longer applied. More recent studies have highlighted the importance of other motivational aspects in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, among them abstract knowledge or self-realisation (Wong, Kolditz, Millen & Potter, 2003; Brænder, 2016). And studies examining Moskos’s I/O model have shown that instead of completely abandoning the institutional elements, the professional soldier is better described as a “pragmatic professional,” driven both by his or her calling and by other motives (Segal, 1986; Woodruff, Kelty & Segal, 2006), and that the hallmark of the contemporary officer is his or her ability to shift between different leadership domains (Brænder & Holting, 2020).

The Conflict between the Political Establishment and the Armed Forces: A Neo-Weberian Interpretation

Keeping in mind the above reservations concerning false dichotomies, a neo-Weberian interpretation affords us an alternative perspective on the conflict between the political establishment and the military professions to that offered by a functionalist approach. Neo-Weberians would not focus unequivocally on the clash between different functions, but on the struggle for autonomy. For instance, when

the state implements reforms to ensure it has the formal power to decide who can access the ranks of a profession, professions will counter that move by putting in place informal mechanisms to guarantee that, in practice, the profession can remain in control. While such mechanisms may be less visible, they are often just as effective as formal barriers. The most famous example of such a process is probably that identified in Pierre Bourdieu's analysis of French elite academies (Bourdieu & Passron, 1964). Here, we discover that some students have an exclusive knowledge about what really counts in higher education – and that they will fare much better than those without it. These privileged students are the “true inheritors,” young people whose parents also attended elite academies. From their early childhood, they have been given the ability to decode the system. Hence, they outperform students who may have the same talent on paper, but who lack the social skills setting the privileged students apart.

Similar processes where the profession “pushes back” to ensure that it retains control may also be observed in the armed forces, following state initiatives to “liberalise” military academies by dictating access criteria or requiring third-party accreditation of military educations, for instance. While such studies are yet to be conducted in Scandinavia, to my knowledge, Marenne M. Jansen (2019) focuses on precisely such processes in a context not too far removed in her recently defended dissertation on officer education in the Netherlands.

Unintended Consequences

Above, I have shown how the neo-Weberian approach can be used to study the professions' quest for autonomy. Turning our attention to analyses conducted by Weber himself, however, we may be able to shed some light on how the tension between the political and the military domains can be understood as an unintended consequence of a process of transition initially set in motion to align the values of the military with the managerial ideals of the political establishment.

A concrete example of the move from institution to occupation in the Danish Armed Forces can be found in the shift from an internal selection system to an application system in filling military positions. When military personnel enjoyed the full privileges of public servants (“tjenestemænd”) with extended rights in terms of job security, a serviceman could be marked out for a position, for anywhere and at any time. Today, servicemen apply for their jobs through the military's human resources department and they do so in competition with other applications. This was the result of a managerial reform in the armed forces following the Parliamentary Defence Settlement of 2012 (Forsvarsministeriet, 2012; Forsvarets Personeltjeneste, 2013). The reform was meant to ensure that positions

were distributed fairly, that the best people were found for the right jobs, and that personal connections would not give anyone a head start in their military career. We should not forget that managerialism in this respect is inherently democratic; professions, conversely, rely on an inherently aristocratic logic according to which the knowledge and insights that define them are exclusive, and that true expertise is only available to a chosen few. Understood thus, the managerial approach is adopted with the intention of quashing such privileges.

Ironically, however, the most spectacular scandals visiting the Danish Armed Forces took place after this reform was instituted. It appears likely that this did not happen in spite of, but as an unintended result of, this reform.

Conceptually, a celebrated description of an archetypal unintended consequence can be found in Weber's seminal *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (Weber, 2000). In this collection of essays, Weber argues that the Calvinist notion of predestination, initially conceived as a rejection of principles concerning the consequences and nature of deeds in Catholic theology, unintentionally led to an increased focus on success in worldly life among Calvinists. As a result, capitalism became especially strong in Calvinist areas.

Likewise, when looking at the conflict between the state and military professions we can also see the breakdown of norms implied when military culture is described as inherently "rotten" or "sick" as an unintended consequence of the very processes that – ironically – were set in motion by the political establishment to democratise military institutions. To follow that argument, we should keep in mind that the shift from an institutional to an occupational logic is also a shift from one mindset to another. It is a shift from a deontological ethic to a utilitarian one, from duties to rewards. Personnel serving in the institutional model weigh obligations against privileges. Personnel serving in the occupational model weigh costs against benefits. This is important because this shift fundamentally changes the nature of the relationship between employer and employee. Weighing obligations against privileges constitutes a both/and-relation. You can be expected to sacrifice everything – it is your duty – because the institution has already given you everything you have, all your privileges. Weighing costs against benefits prioritises an either/or-relation instead. There is a threshold. Beyond that, once the costs exceed the benefits, you will not feel obliged to put in the extra efforts needed to make things work.

In short, it could be argued that while the intention of the managerial human resources reform was to democratise military career paths through equal opportunities, it ended up altering the mindset of the personnel, unintentionally giving incentives to cut corners – instead of pursuing the norms of the profession, they became the architects of their own future. Thus public virtues became private vices.

What To Keep In Mind When Studying Military Professions

Above, I have offered two ways of using the study of military professions to examine the relation between armed forces and society. As mentioned in the introduction, this does not mean that the relation or the tension currently prevailing in Denmark cannot be studied using other approaches. And it should not be seen as an unqualified rejection of the voices contesting the usefulness of a military professions approach altogether.

Inspired by Gil Eyal (2013), Tamir Libel has recently argued that instead of studying the sociology of the military profession, we should instead focus on the sociology of security expertise (Libel, 2019). It is clearly a proposal with very great potential. Instead of only focusing on institutions intrinsically bound to a particular constellation of society, we can allow ourselves to look at the actual “tasks and problems” initially identified by Andrew Abbott (1988) as a core purpose in the sociology of professions. Thus, we can study the actual “management of violence” without having to regard the historically contingent organisation of the armed forces as an obvious point of departure. Following this argument, I can propose at least five ways in which this can widen our perspective. These are presented, in brief, in table 1 below.¹

Case	Tasks and problems that can be included by pursuing a (security) expertise perspective	
The officer corps	How is security expertise executed when officers work in management or staff functions far away from the conduct of war?	
Uniformed personnel	How is security expertise executed on the ground?	
Armed forces personnel (technicians, administrative staff, canteen staff, cleaning staff)	How is security expertise executed by civilian technicians employed by the armed forces?	
Personnel in other state sanctioned organisations commissioned with the management of violence (police officers, firemen, paramedics)	How is security expertise executed by police officers in riot control functions?	

¹ The list is probably not exhaustive, and I hope readers will supplement it.

Case	Tasks and problems that can be included by pursuing a (security) expertise perspective	
Personnel (or individuals) managing violence in non-state organisations <i>(Legitimate organisations: private military and security companies)</i> <i>(Illegitimate organisations: rebels, criminal groups)</i>	How is security expertise executed by private military contractors in war zones?	

Table 1: How a sociology of security expertise can widen our study of the management of violence.

A quick glance at the table should illustrate the potential for widening our perspective by decoupling an expertise approach from a professions approach. These clear analytical advantages aside, I will however, follow Mike Saks (2016) in this critique of Eyal’s proposal (2013), and emphasise that we – by completely giving up the notion of professions – run the risk of throwing the baby out with the bathwater. Granted, we should not confine our study of the military profession to an ideal settled in a very different time and under very different conditions. After all, in terms of military organisation, social values, geo-strategic threats and technological developments the world today is very different from the world in 1957, when Huntington wrote *The Soldier and the State*.

Although we can study security expertise independently of the military profession, however, this does not imply that we should not study the profession at all. Nor does the fact that this decoupling enables us to fruitfully study security expertise independently of the military professions imply that security expertise exists independently of military professionalism. This is the reason why I follow the neo-Weberian Mike Saks (2016) in stating that a unilateral focus on expertise makes it too easy to overlook other prevailing, and therefore relevant, conditions. If we give up the notion of social closure, we run the risk of overlooking the circumstance that in spite of all changes, classical virtues and norms can be tenacious. After all, we still find the tokens of the military – uniforms, organisational structure, tactics, jargon, and codes of conduct – in brands of security expertise far beyond the borders of the profession. Thus, when studying how such other branches of security expertise set themselves apart, the continuous signification of such tokens in other settings constitutes an obvious point of departure.

I do not argue, then, that we should abandon the notion of expertise, as it helps us broaden our analytical perspectives; my argument is simply that such a

notion should not stand alone. In table 1, above, I listed five ways in which a turn towards a sociology of expertise may help us widen our focus in the study of the relation between military (or security) and society. In table two, below, I add a new column to this list. This column points out five tasks and problems each related to a social closure perspective, each emphasising the importance of keeping the enduring nature of professional norms and ideals in mind (applicable also when studying expertise beyond the boundaries of the military professions.)

Case	Tasks and problems that can be included by pursuing a (security) expertise perspective	Tasks and problems that can be included by pursuing a social closure perspective
The officer corps	How is security expertise executed when officers work in management or staff functions far away from the conduct of war?	How do military managers articulate their work tasks as uniquely military?
Uniformed personnel	How is security expertise executed on the ground?	How is the traditional military hierarchy challenged when enlisted personnel and Non-Commissioned Officers have more practical experience than their superior officers?
Armed forces personnel (technicians, administrative staff, canteen staff, cleaning staff)	How is security expertise executed by civilian technicians employed by the armed forces?	Do technical personnel encounter the prevalence of traditional military norms barrier when working as a side-by-side with uniformed personnel?
Personnel in other state sanctioned organisations commissioned with the management of violence (police officers, firemen, paramedics)	How is security expertise executed by police officers in riot control functions?	Does the implementation of military tactics in paramilitary police units contribute to the escalation of police violence?
Personnel (or individuals) managing violence in non-state organisations (<i>Legitimate organisations:</i> private military and security companies (<i>Illegitimate organisations:</i> rebels, criminal groups)	How is security expertise executed by private military contractors in war zones?	Is the death of a private military contractor recognised as a military sacrifice?

Table 2: How a sociology of security expertise can widen our study of the management of violence. And how a social closure perspective may still be important.

Table 2 illustrates that, in the analysis of any case, your approach decides the nature of your perspective at the outset. This can be neatly illustrated from a recent example from the Danish military (relevant to row two in the table above, if we expand the perspective to uniformed personnel in general rather than officers alone). The soldiers who participated in the very fighting-intense deployment of soldiers to Helmand between 2006 and 2014 gained experience that will always set them apart from other members of the armed forces. When they served as NCOs and junior officers, they were more experienced and more highly decorated than their superior officers – a status that cannot solely be seen as a matter of “expertise.”

The takeaway is this: studying the military profession, one should choose one’s perspective with caution. While, as noted in the introduction, I advocate entering the field with an open mind, it should be emphasised that this does not mean that the different perspectives are necessarily compatible. What you discern using one approach may be invisible when using another.

Conclusion

At the outset, I asked two questions: What is a military profession? And how can the military professions be studied?

There is no single military profession; there are a number of them. And, historically seen, it makes little sense to refer to military professions as social entities. The genesis of military institutions and the association of one particular group within these institutions, the officer corps, is bound to a particular type of society. Traditionally, military professions have been analysed using either a functionalist perspective, focusing on the characteristics setting the profession apart, or a neo-Weberian perspective, focusing on the procedures in place to maintain that distinction. As the characteristics can also be found in other contexts, it makes sense to also focus on these more generally. Before abandoning a professions approach altogether, we should keep in mind that social closure and unintended consequences not only ensure the continuous existence of the military profession, but also mean that professional norms may also prevail outside the confines of the military institutions.

So, how should we analyse military professions? Overall, I would argue that this should be done with an open mind, so that one is aware of both the strengths and the limitations of the chosen approach. More specifically, when setting out to conduct such a study, one should consider the three questions below:

What aspects of military professionalism do you want to study? Are you focusing solely on the characteristics of military expertise (knowledge, practice and ethics), on procedures of social closure, or on something completely different?

Regardless of the choice, the field would clearly benefit if we seek to explain the reasons informing our focus.

Who are you studying when you study the military profession – and how is the study to be conducted? (The tables above highlight the breadth of potential cases. It makes a big difference, however, if we centre on our own perceptions or on the perceptions of others; on performance measures; whether our sources are objective or subjective; whether we conduct surveys, interviews or document analyses.)

Why do you study the military profession? Explain the bigger picture. Professional status and professional identities continue to undergo significant change and constant renegotiation. Make it clear to your reader and, not least, to yourself what general trend your chosen case exemplifies.

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9. The Dynamics of Professional Values in Officership: A study of 300 Years of Officer Performance Evaluation Systems¹

Vilhelm Stefan Holsting

Introduction: The Dynamics of Professional Military Values

Western military institutions have seen a degree of transformation in recent decades, prompting much discussion on values considered core or arbitrary to the military profession (Williams, 2008, p. 200). In this chapter, I argue that we must develop a greater understanding of the origins and development of military values in order to more accurately understand their continued significance for military professionalism and civil-military relations; in this way, we will arrive at a better understanding of the nature and effects of such transformations.

While military sociology has sought to understand the nature, origins and development of professional values, classical sociology has offered little to our

¹ Founded on data collected for the author's Ph.D. project on senior officership in the political-professional relation (Holsting, 2017), this chapter expands on the general conclusion about value sediments.

understanding of the historical relation between military development and social change (Burk, 1993, p. 167). In military sociology, opinion has been divided on whether military values are unique and universal, as argued by Samuel Huntington (1985), or unique but influenced by society, as argued by Morris Janowitz (1971) and Bernard Boëne (1990, p. 59), or under constant pressure, sometimes even replaced by external values on account of societal change, as argued by Charles Moskos (1977) and by John Williams (2008, p. 215), who concludes: “When societal values change, so also will those of [the] military.” In Denmark, the latter position was concretely reflected recently when the Danish Chief of Defence, addressing the entire corps of officers after several years of transformation, stressed: “The values of the military are the values of the Danish society translated into a military framework” (Chief of Defence 2020, p. 1).

As Boëne (1990, p. 11) states, however, influential practitioners frequently present military values as universal and unique; for Sarkesian (1981, p. 11), these values include “honesty, integrity, loyalty, honor, and gentlemanly conduct.” Although such values may be considered unique by many, they are typically described so weakly and in such superficial terms that they could easily represent values of other social groups – or simply mirror ephemeral or obsolete societal values. Even Samuel Huntington (1985) and Morris Janowitz (1971) offer us empirically imprecise historical understandings of military values; Libel (2020, p. 16) was not alone in his assertion that both arrived at “conclusions considering the nature of military profession without empirical exploration.” Detached from their concrete historical and professional qualities, military value statements seem to be drained of their influence on today’s military reforms; current public governance seems to prefer specific requirements on behalf of “diffuse professional norms,” as stressed by Leicht, Walter, Sainsaulieu and Davies (2009, p. 585). The issue of military values was, for example, largely neglected in the political agreement leading to radical reductions and a restructuring of military training, organisation and high command in the Danish Armed Forces in 2012 (Holsting, 2017, p. 318).

More empirical clarity on the historical emergence of values at the civil-military boundary, and the ways in which those values become core components of the professional repertoire, is needed. Military sociology needs to provide a thorough empirical understanding of how military values emerge in order to gain a more accurate perspective on contemporary disruptions to these values. Through an examination of a unique archive of military performance evaluation systems used by the Danish military in the course of 300 years, this chapter sets out to analyse how values of officership have developed over the centuries and what this development tells us about the dynamic relationship between military values and societal change.

A Sociological Perception of the Emergence of the Military Profession and its Values

It is generally understood in the field of sociology that the army officer corps began to develop professional characteristics in the early 18th century (Huntington 1985, p. 19). Norbert Elias has argued that, during this time, certain technological and societal developments saw bodies of “gentleman” officers with fighting skills and sailors with navigational and sailing skills merge to become a corps of naval officers (Elias, 2007).

The historical contemporaneity of army and navy professionalisation allows us to speak of a general military professionalisation, even if the two services developed along different lines. Based on historical studies of these services, Gerke Teitler (1977, p. 112) proposed: “The characteristics of a professional military corps amount firstly to possession of technical competence, secondly, military traditions, a code of honor and the sense of sharing a common fate, and lastly, the ethos of service to the State.” Whereas technical competences and the code of honour are deeply rooted in the military operational environment, the ethos of service to the state is undoubtedly a core integrating aspect of the military as a societal entity. Notwithstanding Teitler’s rigorous examination of professionalisation, we still arrive at a perception of military values as unique and universal rather than as responsive to dynamic civil-military relations.

Even Janowitz (1971, p. 23) argued: “Most fundamentally, the professional soldier is conservative, since his social origin is grounded in the history of the post-feudal nobility in Europe and its social equivalents in United States. His prototype is the Prussian officer corps.” It is unclear, however, how this “post-feudal nobility” officership became, and continues to be, a core part of professional self-understanding across different service branches and societal configurations.

Conversely, Charles Moskos’s 1977 examination of the military, leading to the widely used Institutional/Occupational (I/O) model, implies a significant emergent societal relation. For Moskos, traditional institutional military values like sacrifice, esprit de corps and passion related to a military calling were replaced by occupational civilian market values like individualisation, cost-benefit and self-interest. John Williams (2008, p. 200) later expanded on this notion of military (de)professionalisation, relating the value dynamics to the effects of post-modernism. For Williams, “effects include serious challenges to traditional military culture, such as cultural relativism and the imposing of non-military social, ethical, and political criteria of evaluation on their militaries.” If the societal effect is so pervasive today, one might ask, how is it that the officer’s values were previously so unique and universal?

Military sociology, this is to say, does not provide us with any convincing, detailed, historical understanding of the relationship between social development and the diachronic emergence of military values. Most arguments along the lines of those made by Moskos and Williams leave an impression of continuing deprofessionalisation, in the sense that universal military values sense are arbitrarily forced on the military, causing cultural relativism and thereby loss of a military calling and a genuine fighting spirit. The authors do not demonstrate, for example, how the military profession thoroughly incorporates new values through a pragmatic and logical process of accommodation to societal change through, say, alterations of performance evaluation systems. It is easily overlooked that societal changes can become catalysts for new military values, not only through the military's reluctant adaptation of civil values but also through a more active and engaged process re-shaping professional functionality and legitimacy for a new era.

A Unique Opportunity to Study the Deep Historical Development of Military Values Empirically

While no previous project has systematically studied the transformation of military performance evaluation systems, there have been studies of the historical development of performance evaluations or appraisals as an organisational practice (Scott, Clothier & Spriegel, 1941; George, 1972; Weise & Buckley, 1998). According to Weise and Buckley, performance evaluations, as means to the systematic improvement of efficiency, were an artefact of industrialisation in the 18th century; it should be noted that the systematic performance evaluations of American officers conducted during the First World War itself prompted a more extensive business-oriented performance evaluation practice.

Nevertheless, a general breakthrough of performance evaluations in the labour market, including that of Denmark, did not arrive until after the Second World War (Carlsson, 1948). During the war, the United States and Great Britain re-established the field of military psychology, then dormant after its inception in the First World War. The Danish Armed Forces drew on this in the forming of scientifically based scales and evaluation criteria (Psykologikommisionen, 1949; Weise & Buckley, 1998, p. 233–235). Between the 1950s and 1970s, Peter Drucker's development of *management by objectives* and Douglas McGregor's *work motivation* thus served to widely inspire performance evaluation practices (Murphy & Cleveland, 1995). Some slightly earlier forerunners to those emerging management concepts appear in the Danish Navy and Air Force evaluation systems of

1949 to 1950 (Marineministeriet, 1950; FOARK 3;² FOARK 6) and continue in the first joint system, FORPUBS, from 1976 (Forsvarsministeriet, 1976). Systematic performance evaluation, then, has been widely used in a military context for some time, its methods mutually inspirational for military and civil society.

Those performance evaluation systems are relevant today mainly due to their historical significance, notably for how they formed the military as a part of society. Danish military performance evaluation practice is unique – not because other professions or military systems do not conduct performance evaluations, but because, owing to Danish archival practice, documentation has been preserved for more than 300 years (Holsting 2017, p. 142). By offering a very homogenous, diachronic data-set, these documents provide a unique opportunity for the empirical understanding of changes in the prioritisation of military values over a long term.

Theorising a Plurality of Values

In order to examine changing values of officership, I draw on Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thévenot's work of 2006 on orders of worth, notably pragmatic conceptualisations of justification and the plurality of incommensurable values. The analytical approach to the empirical exploration of values has been widely discussed since Parsons (1983, pp. 27–28) made the argument that values, formed by normative agreements, were “the very heart of the human enterprise... what made social order possible and what made the order potentially resistant to evolution.” Boltanski and Thévenot then described how moral judgements of people and things operate through a repertoire of moral modes or values. Common values must reference an idea of the common good, which has historically proven its worth in practice by becoming institutionalised and a viable part of social life. Moreover, such common values cannot be reduced to one higher universal value. By applying a pluralistic value approach, it is possible to observe the heterogeneous value dynamics in the military profession.

Here, this value approach is used as an analytical framework, empirically sensitive across time and capable of observing diverse values both at a societal and a professional level. Boltanski and Thévenot's (2006) framework consists of a number of historical values, or modes of worth. Originally, they used those modes to understand patterns in the way individuals justify their actions to others in order to command respect, first identifying six competing values with diverging quality

2 The Danish Armed Forces archives at the Danish National Archives; the number refers to a specific sub-unit in this archive (see Appendix 1.)

criteria (Table 1): *inspiration*, *opinion*, *domesticity*, *market*, *industry* and *civic*. Later, Boltanski and Chiapello (2007) added a seventh, the *project* value, in their influential work *The New Spirit of Capitalism*; oriented to the future, the project value contrasts diametrically with domesticity, a value rooted in the past. Boltanski and Thévenot derived the project value from studies of the diachronic transformations of social coordination under capitalism between the 1960s and the 1990s. The authors' analytical strategy is similar to that employed here.

In the 2012 work *Love and Justice as Competences*, Boltanski further outlined other modes of action also representing distinct values. These are the modes of *violence*, *love* and *fairness*. I have previously translated these values into military terms in order to use them analytically in a military context (Holting, 2017, p. 72–79; 115–140). With reference to Carl von Clausewitz's (1981) description of warrior spirit, the mode of violence in the legitimate sense of power of action has been translated into the value of *execution*; the mode of love was translated into the value of *scarification*; representing the band of brothers, into the value of *brotherly love* shared between members of a team enduring great risk in the course of action; the mode of fairness was translated into the value of *subordination*, representing the naturalness of obedience and discipline in military behaviour.

In my analysis, the ten values are used in combination with a conceptual-historical approach inspired by Reinhart Koselleck (2002). Here, the values, which officers connect to through the quality criteria inherent in the performance evaluations, can be seen as core signifiers capable of transforming the value framework of officership. The changing criteria in the systems are, on the one hand, imprints of the historical events that move the language of the actors; on the other hand, the criteria themselves act as catalysts for historical development, in the sense that language also influences practice (Koselleck, 2002). Consequently, the observation of criteria related to values in officership as they appear in performance evaluation systems is categorised in accordance with this conceptual framework of the 10 values in accordance with Table 1. By applying this framework to the changing military evaluation systems, it is possible to map and to track how values emerge and change historically in the military.

Values	Principles	Quality Criteria/Behaviour (examples)		
Inspiration	Geniality	Experimenting	Challenging	Innovative
Opinion	Fame	Convincing	Reputable	Respected
Domestic	Honourability	Authoritative	Loyal	Dutiful
Market	Competition	Opportunistic	Competitive	Efficient
Industrial	Effectiveness	Productive	Structured	Reliable
Civic	Community	Unifying	Egalitarian	Fair
Project	Agility	Flexible	Connective	Holistic
Execution	Power	Strong-willed	Resilient	Solution-oriented
Sacrifice	Devotion	Caring	Passionate	Unselfish
Subordination	Naturalness	Obedient	Disciplined	Tolerant

Table 1. Framework of common values related to officer performance evaluation reports.

Data and Methods

Approximately 3000 individual evaluations from Army, Navy and Air Force have been analysed and interpreted with the support of contemporary military administrative regulations, textbooks and professional journals discussing officership, professional values and evaluation practices (see Holsting, 2017, pp. 84–87; 142–171).

I have identified changes in evaluation systems by comparing archives containing individual performance evaluations and archives containing military regulations. The historical mapping of performance evaluation systems is challenging; until 1880, administrative practice was markedly less consistent to that of the following period. Further, the Navy and the Army followed different tracks until 1976, even though their practices inspire each other on occasion.

Since performance evaluation systems were initially ungoverned by standardised regulations, the period between their inception in 1690 and the 1880s was examined through a review of the first box of archived evaluations for people whose surnames began with the letter “A,” where evaluation categories, evaluating comments and details for the actual evaluations were meticulously recorded. This proved a useful means of clarifying the specific historical use of evaluation systems, notwithstanding certain uncertainties: the exact year when one system replaced another is not always clear, for example; being un-standardised by regulations and often hand-copied, variations between the early systems were not fully recorded; and it is difficult to say how frequently evaluations were performed in, say, the 18th century. Consistency improves in all of these conditions from the early 1800s, however, and from the middle of the 19th century, the systems were regulated with pre-printed forms, regulations and guidelines.

The Dynamics of Professional Values in Officership

	Army	Navy	Air force
Phase 1	1730–1764 First observed conduct protocols (only occasional evaluations).	1730–1764 First observed conduct protocols (only occasional evaluations).	
	1764–1867 First pre-printed conduct protocols with fixed evaluation categories and evaluation scale (only occasional evaluations until ca. 1800).	1756–1780 Conduct protocols with continuous evaluations on officers.	
Phase 2	1867–1881 Promotion protocols, purely free text (identical for the entire Army).	1780–1869 First pre-printed conduct protocols with fixed evaluation categories and evaluation scale (identical for the entire Navy).	
	1881–1976 First pre-printed individual evaluation form. Identical for the entire Army. Primarily free text with few fixed evaluation categories.	1869–1880 Promotion protocols with fixed evaluation categories and evaluation scale.	
		1880–1935 First pre-printed individual evaluation form. Still with fixed evaluation categories and scale.	
		1935–48 Increased number of evaluation categories.	
Phase 3		1948–1976 First scientifically based system (psychology) and new evaluation categories.	1950–1976 First Air Force system combining parts from contemporary Army and Navy systems.
	1976–2007 (FORPUBS) First joint evaluation system. Second scientifically based system (psychology/sociology) including fixed categories like Navy/Air force and free text in the Army. Including feedback and relational development dialogue		
Phase 4	2007– (FOKUS) Second joint evaluation system. First system developed in dialogue with users, still with fixed evaluation categories and free text. Including feedback and relational development dialogue.		

Table 2. Different performance evaluation systems over time in all services.

Table 2 illustrates the analysed performance evaluation systems in specific time-frames divided by services. The general phases illustrated in the first column, reflecting Figure 1, will be substantiated in the following section.

Until the military reforms following the Second Schleswig War in 1881, the Army and Navy systems were described as “conduct protocols”; after this, they were described as “promotion protocols” or “promotion evaluations” as they became more closely related to systematic meritocratic promotion practices (Krigsministeriet, 1881; Marineministeriet, 1881). From the inauguration of the first joint system (FORPUBS) in 1976, the systems are described as “combined evaluation and development forms.” In the current system (FOKUS), they are described as a “competence development” system. The latest two systems include development dialogues; all preceding systems were pure rating tools kept secret from the evaluated officers. The Navy system from 1948 was the first system based on a scientific approach with psychological evaluation categories; FOKUS became the first system developed in dialogue with the users. Those differences are related to societal changes and represent the phases unfolded below.

Categorisation of the Epochal Emergence of Values

The complete examination of performance evaluation systems from the earliest attempt in 1690 to the most recent version of 2006 reveals four general phases concerning the character of values as outlined in Table 1. The four very different types of ideal officer revealed here – the sovereign patriarch, the patriarchal administrator, the professional bureaucrat and the calculative change agent (Figure 1) – relate to and promote specific values indicated in Table 1 and, together, demonstrate the link between professional and societal development.

<p>Soverign Patriarch Until the 2nd Schleswig War Primarily Domestic and Subordination Values Supplemented by Execution and Sacrifice</p>	<p>Patriarchal Administrator Until World War II Primarily Domestic and Industrial Values Supplemented by Execution and Sacrifice</p>	<p>Professional Bureaucrat During The Cold War Primarily Industrial and Civic Values Supplemented by Execution and Sacrifice</p>	<p>Calculative Change Agent During ‘Globalization’ Primarily Industrial and Project Values Supplemented by Execution and Sacrifice</p>
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Figure 1. Breakdown and development of professional values in officership through four historical phases.

Even though the above is derived from classified performance evaluations relating only to internal discipline and to the career of specific officers, the values represented in the table do not only relate to internal professional concerns; they represent the different ways in which the profession has managed the societal function it is assigned. In the following, I will analyse how the four periods of qualitatively different ideals of officership correspond to societal change.

Phase 1: to the Second Schleswig War

Ideal officer type: the sovereign patriarch in the autocratic society

In Phase 1, officership was mainly based on a traditional domestic value combined with strict subordination values supplemented by execution and sacrifice. Here, the officer, most often a member of the nobility, represented the ideal of the *sovereign patriarch*: formidable, often strict and punishing, yet a caring father figure generally possessed of a blind loyalty to king and country, bound by a divine oath and societal privileges. This ideal conformed to the contemporary model of governance in Denmark: an autocratic, absolute monarchy, regulated by law between 1660 and 1849 (Olden-Jørgensen, Lyngby & Mentz, 2010). As such, this form of ideal officer reflected the sovereign patriarch by combining the attributes of the uncontestable, strict leader with the caring *pater familias*.

Turning to quality criteria, principles and values, the earliest evaluation systems found in the archives of the Danish Armed Forces (FOARK) appear to be older than those identified in the earlier studies mentioned by Weise and Buckley (1998); “Niels Juell’s Conduct List of the Navy’s Officer Staff of 1690” (von der Recke, 1861) may represent the earliest systematic attempt to evaluate the quality of military personnel in Denmark.-

As early as the late 17th century, we find fixed evaluation criteria in the Navy such as “knowledge of the service in general,” “activity in service in general,” “performance during command,” “seamanship,” “subordination,” “relation to subordinates,” “inspection of order and cleanliness,” “economically responsible” and “viability for higher appointments” (FOARK 22).

In the Navy, especially, pre-printed protocols were systematised and based on the same evaluation criteria from the end of the 17th century until the 1880s. In the Army, on the other hand, we see various practices, apparently inspired by the Navy lists (FOARK 23), including pre-printed checkboxes related to different aspects of officership. From the 1880s, the Army began to develop its own format emphasising the evaluators’ personal evaluation comments (FOARK 13; 17). The services of both protocols initially reveal a general focus on obedience, energy (drive) and good behaviour, and thus on values related to strict subordination, execution and domesticity.

The conduct protocol of the 1st Battalion of the Zealand Hunter Corps, 30 September, 1814 offers a typical example of a contemporary evaluation system. Here, a Regiment commander evaluates his second in command, leading the regiment in his absence: “A man of boundless honesty. In my 2 1/4 years absence commanded and kept together the regiment with much order and honour” (FOARK 23, 6). The officer was classified as “Good” under the evaluation category “Command with dignity and good manners” (a domestic value); “Very Good” under the evaluation category “Subordination and, as a result, Prompt Obedience in Executing Superiors’ Commandments” (strict subordination); and “Good” under the evaluation category “Cool and tireless Courage, and quick-witted and decisive in the moment of danger” – values of execution and sacrifice (FOARK 1; 9; 10; 13; 14; 19; 20; 22; 23). Together, these qualities demonstrate the primary values of the first phase in general, and, specifically, values forming the ideal officer during the period of autocracy enduring in Denmark until the mid-18th century.

Phase 2: to the Second World War

Ideal officer type: the patriarchal administrator during industrialisation

The second phase began in the contexts of the comprehensive industrialisation of the military in the 19th century and a period of national and military self-examination after the shock of Denmark’s defeat to Prussia and Austria in the Second Schleswig War. A new form of officership began to appear, combining the emerging industrial value of effectiveness with the older, enduring, patriarchal domestic value, thereby recreating the profession of military officer as what might be described as a patriarchal administrator. These new values, still supplemented by execution and sacrifice, together created a new ideal type, which, while it continued to hold an elevated position, was increasingly upheld and regulated by bureaucratic and mechanical standards such as manuals and doctrines related to the technologicalisation and professionalisation of increasingly complex capabilities and battlefields.

The ideal of the patriarchal administrator, prominent throughout the First World War, endured until the Second World War, reflecting a time of increasing industrialisation in both the societal and military spheres. At the societal level, bureaucracy and Fordism dominated social and organisational transformations; at the military level, the ideal reflected a progression from manpower and horsepower to the railway engine, and from sail to engine – in short, to what has been called “thermodynamic warfare” (Bousquet, 2009, p. 921) characterised by the rise of mass armies, total warfare and nuclear weapons. Here, the ideal officer archetype should embrace and master the scientific way of warfare.

These thermodynamic transformations involved the implementation of a system of meritocratic advancement in the officers' corps, which gradually replaced the autocratic and aristocratic military order where advancement had been contingent on class and age (Huntington, 1985, p. 31). It is essential to consider the corollaries in the criteria, principles and values defining the period's evaluation systems in this light.

New methods of performance evaluation began to alter traditional systems of advancement founded on the principles of the domestic value. According to a military proclamation ("Kundgørelse for Hæren") of 1867, the previous age-based protocols for advancement could thus be supplemented with so-called promotion lists which should be based on eligibility for promotion: "The officers are listed on promotion lists in the order in which they are considered eligible, including the specific grounds for such recommendation" (Krigsministeriet, 1867, p. 37; 1868a).

Similar substantiation requirements also began to gain ground in other aspects of contemporary staff administration. In 1881, for instance, a military criminal code was introduced; with it military legal practice began to resemble civil legal practice by limiting the right to sentence individuals without trial (Forsvarministeriet, 2005). The will to regulate good conduct through even more specific regulations suggests that the administrative practice was shifting from more or less unwritten domestic rules towards industrial-bureaucratic principles of administration. Even though the Army and Navy introduced very different systems, they both began to assign more weight to the individual substantiation requirement. In this period, that is, class and age were superseded by a meritocratic principle of advancement as the guiding and defining values of officership gradually shifted from the domestic to the domestic-industrial (Krigsministeriet, 1868b; 1870; 1880; 1908; 1939). As a naval evaluation of the second-in-command of the ironclad *Lindormen* attests:

A skilled and polite officer with excellent knowledge of the service and very efficient. Throughout his conduct, he behaves very militaristically, independently and reliably. Very skilled as a sailor and pilot, excellent organiser, very good command, excellent ability to get along with subordinates. He is a gifted and highly educated man. (FOARK 4: Promotion evaluation, 1889)

"Polite," "militaristic" and "educated" all relate to the domestic value; "efficient," "reliable" and "excellent organiser" relate to the industrial value. The quality criteria of both values seem equally important as signifiers, thereby stressing the predominant domestic-industrial value.

Phase 3 – During the Cold War

Ideal officer type: professional bureaucrat in a modern democracy

In the third phase, covering the aftermath of the Second World War and the general rebuilding of the Danish Armed Forces, values in officership once again transformed in relation to societal change. The changes occurred gradually in Phase 3 alongside a military adaptation to NATO membership from 1949 and the emergence of the Danish welfare society which included the evolving rights- and efficiency-based civil labour market in the 1950s and 1960s. The former resulted in an Anglicisation of material, education, procedures and language; the latter finds its expression in the unionisation of military personnel and gradual adaptation of labour market standards parallel to the I/O model proposed by Moskos (1977). These changes represented a re-professionalisation of the officer corps, this time based on a *civic* value and combining a pedagogy-, democracy- and cooperation-based officership with industrial values of standardisation and mass production, necessitated by the need for a huge number of enlisted personnel.

The general democratisation of the educational system was also reflected in a new approach to military leadership (Jensen, Olsen, Svensson & Zilmer, 2004). Here, strict subordination made way for a dialogic subordination (Holsting 2017, p. 204) both in the political-professional relation and between ranks, which in turn also reflected the transformation of the public sector from the 1960s. To a high degree, authority was delegated from the central administration to the professions (Administrationsudvalget, 1966). This was also the case for the new joint chief, the Chief of Defence, who gradually became the most prominent professional expert between the 1970s and the 2000s. Here, the ideal officer was considered a professional bureaucrat (Rennison, 2011), enjoying strong positions of expertise and professional autonomy (Forsvarskommandoen, 2000). Professionally, the ideal officer became the expert, with the highest technical skill and, in consequence, the ability to teach and motivate his subordinates – an educator subject to science and law more than an omnipotent and sovereign ruler.

In practice the starting point of the general transition was a pedagogical working group, The Army Pedagogical Working Group established in 1961 to examine an increased number of disciplinary and educational problems (Heise, 1953, pp. 49–69; Sabroe & Rieneck, 1968, p. 3; Berg, 1967, pp. 153–164). Politically, the so-called Højby Committee provided a series of reports identifying a problematic working environment and an increasing divergence between military leadership habits and emerging democratic and humanistic societal standards (Forsvarsministeriet, 1966a; 1966b; 1969a; 1969b; Petersen, 1967). As this coincided with a revision of the pedagogical principles used in Danish primary and

lower secondary schools in the 1960s and a democratisation of teaching methods, a similar revision of pedagogy and leadership in the Danish Armed Forces was considered timely at the political level.

Driven by the joint Defence Command established in 1970, this resulted in a number of joint initiatives focused on the creation of a new *industrial-civic* officer ideal, attained through leadership courses and directives focusing on leadership and pedagogy (Hærkommandoen, 1969; Forsvarskommandoen, 1976; 1978). This fundamental shift in leadership ideals is evident in the following quote from the Defence Ministry: “The leader must safeguard the interests of the group if he is to be accepted by the group and thus affect the development of norms ... The leader will shatter his personal authority if he attempts to lead exclusively through orders of obedience” (Forsvarsministeriet, 1966a, pp. 17–18). From this point, then, officership was to rely on informal acceptance among the subordinates rather than fear of punishment. Traditional, strict subordination was thus replaced by pedagogy and democratic-inclusive ideals. The leader should be able to “explain, discuss, stimulate group decisions and leave decisions to the group” (Forsvarsministeriet 1966a, p.18).

The first joint performance evaluation system, FORPUBS (Forsvarsministeriet, 1976), was implemented in 1976. In general, it stood out in two ways compared with former evaluation systems. First, it was founded on the Navy and Air Force systems of 1949 and 1950 (FOARK 3 & 6), based on insights from the fields of psychology and sociology. FORPUBS thus paved the way for knowledge-based evaluation criteria at the expense of the preceding “common sense” criteria.

Second, FORPUBS represented the new leadership ideal. It paved the way for the principles of the civic value in officership – that is, principles of influence, participation and delegation – and thereby broke with the traditional values of domestic order and subordination. New evaluation categories such as “pedagogical talent” (“Presents and explains topics in a motivating and comprehensible way”), “cooperation” (“Communicates participation in solving joint tasks, participates actively in solving those tasks and ensures mutual orientation”) and “delegation” (“Delegates tasks appropriately and exercises the necessary control of completion”) made their way into officership as new civic evaluation categories.

As such, FORPUBS became a core institutional part of the transition in leadership values during the third phase, in which civic values of officership emerged – even if, in practice, the “autocratic” domestic value continued to prevail until the late 1980s, representing a lengthy gap between emerging professional and democratic standards and traditional professional self-understanding. This remark from the evaluation of a lieutenant colonel in the 1980s offers a typical example of the tension between traditional authority and civic values: “In his

eagerness to find the best solution at all times, however, he seeks more acceptance and support than he needs. Consequently, it must be estimated that a more autocratic leadership would be fully accepted, both by superiors and subordinate leaders” (FOARK 8: FORPUBS, 1981).

In other words, it is possible to trace a measure of scepticism toward democratic-civic ideals. Many officers had not yet come to appreciate the values of this new paradigm of officership.

Phase 4 – the Globalised Era

Ideal officer type: the calculating agent of change in an era of globalisation

The most recent period in which the values of officership have experienced change is that of the post-Cold War years, the era of global governance (Finkelstein, 1995).

Here, the archetype of the ideal officer is shaped by two simultaneous societal drivers. The first is formed by the political ambitions of global governance, which include an assertive security policy resulting in multiple “out of area” operations, primarily in the Balkans, the Middle East and Afghanistan (Pedersen, 2012). Here, the ability to conduct full-scale operations, tactical flexibility, rapid reaction and continuous adaptability became core professional elements. The second driver was the economic logic behind public modernisation – the so-called New Public Management programmes (McLaughlin & Osborne, 2010) – which became an inherent part of all political defence agreements, principally from the 2000s. The alteration of officership values provoked by these forces emerged as the combination of *industrial* and *project* values; the associated ideal officer type is that of the calculating agent of change (Holsting, 2017, p. 192) who constantly strives to rationalise, optimise and innovate by breaking with previous military practices and traditions to get the most, militarily speaking, out of the least possible resources. Here, the enduring domestic value is generally repressed. The officer who safeguards the traditional order increasingly comes to stand in opposition to the continuous demands for change. The contradictions between project and domestic values also constitute a tension amongst the professional actors: it is difficult to simultaneously maintain both domestic values and the new values significantly formed by economic forces. This applies both internally, between professionals, and in the political-professional relationship.

Again, evaluation systems and the criteria on which they were founded were required to adapt to the new context. The most recent system, FOKUS (Competence Development and Evaluation System of the Danish Armed Forces), was

launched in 2007 (Forsvarskommandoen, 2007; 2012). In the main, FORPUBS was abandoned on account of its outdated evaluation categories and the fact that the ambition of systematic competence development was not adequately supported (Lund, Jepsen & Wedell-Wedellsborg, 2000). Thus, FOKUS became the first system with methodical user surveys playing a role in its design. It took as its starting point the relatively new concept of competence and the standards for state staff policy presented by the Ministry of Finance in the previous decade (Finansministeriet, 1998). The competences preferred by the users appeared to be cooperation, flexibility and adaptability related to the project value (Forsvarets Center for Lederskab, 2003). Through user surveys, the performance evaluation system thus accommodated a value that was formally new but which already existed in the officer corps.

The new system was not only intended to focus on individual competence development. The aim was to create an organisation capable of continually gaining insight and adaptation. Competence development was not considered a matter of changing one's personality; the entire organisational context and the relation between people became subject to evaluation. In the routine development dialogues, effective problem-solving was to be the focal point. This shift from personality to ever-changing problem-solving represented the new emphasis on adaptability and the formation of networks as a basis for varying activities, associated with the project value.

These societal drivers were reflected in the new competences in FOKUS. This is evident from the inclusion of the values of *flexibility* ("Adjusts to new demands"), *holistic approach* ("Understands the context of the task at hand"), *future-orientation* ("Demonstrates far-sighted leadership in connection with the development of the unit"), *communication* ("Listens actively and communicates clearly in writing and speech") and *the development of others* ("Supports the development of others"). These all relate to an activation of the project value's principles of activity, agility and flexibility. Corresponding to the Personnel Agency's view of leadership, they were at the top of the officers' own priority lists (Personalestyrelsen, 2003). The main value differences between FORPUBS and FOKUS were that the domestic value, ever-present in all previous systems and phases, now disappeared completely, while the project value, absent in previous systems, now became central in senior officership. FOKUS can be said, then, to represent the contemporary movement from domestic to industrial and project principles. As such, it also reflects the contextual development in both security and administration policy. (Forsvarskommandoen, 2008; Ejersbo & Greve, 2014). In both cases, the ability to promote agility, responsiveness and efficiency can be considered the prominent value. Two qualitative terms in particular represented the emergence of the project value: *modernisation*,

that is, breaking with tradition, and *holistic understanding*, that is, the will to make local changes with the collective in mind (Forsvarsministeriet 2012, p. 9).

Additionally, the new project competences were combined with industrial competences resembling the former FORPUBS competences: *analytical mindset* (“Carefully considers the parts of a task and options for solving it”), *planning* (“Predicts and plans each step of the problem solving process”), and *resource conscious* (“Prioritises goals and means on an ongoing basis, ensuring that resources are used in the best way possible”). In combination with the project competences, they form the ideal the officer as calculative change agent.

FOKUS also draws on other values that emerged in the previous phases. The *execution* value is represented by the competences *decision making* (“Makes necessary and effective decisions”), *management* (“Charts the course and coordinates efforts, ensuring that results are achieved in time”) and *initiative* (“Independently launches appropriate activities”). Furthermore, the *sacrificial* value is represented by the competence *handling pressure* (“Keeps a sense of perspective and drive in stressful situations”).

Indeed, while never appearing as dominant values, the execution value and the sacrificial value have been present through all phases, denoted by different qualitative concepts. Although the pure civic value from Phase 3 seems to be absent in FOKUS, elements of the industrial-civic ideal are still represented. It appears in the competencies *motivates others* (“Creates energy and will to act”) and *cooperation* (“Contributes actively to solving the task in interaction with others”).

Discussion – Sedimentary Displacement of Values

The historical analysis of performance evaluation systems discloses both the replacement and the displacement of values, showing how the systems themselves seem to adapt to and incorporate societal values as part of their requirements to officers. More, emerging values do not seem to entirely replace those preceding them; rather, in all the analysed cases, the dynamics seem to be a question of a type of displacement in which new constellations emerge with the “newest” value the most prominent, supplemented by previous values now forming secondary significances. In so doing, the systems and officers who apply them manage to create a new equilibrium between several incommensurable values inherent in the profession over time. They uphold traditional values and connect and adapt to new requirements and emerging values even though they seem, in principle, to be impossible to reconcile.

How are we to understand such value dynamics? As argued by Koselleck (2002), societal key values can be understood in both an *epochal* and *sedimenta-*

ry way. Whereas the epochal (Figure 1) illustrates which values dominate in a specific phase, the sedimentary illustrates a social value accumulation based on historical processes. Figure 2 illustrates the sedimentary tendency as it appears in the analysis. New values lie on top of already-existing values in the sense that they become predominant in the evaluations, thereby displacing the dominance of the prior value. The tendency to displace rather than replace values means that incommensurable values accrue in the military profession. This increases the complexity of a value system the actors are required to practically manage and to justify, both in internal evaluations and to the outside world.

Figure 2 illustrates how this happens parallel to societal changes through eras characterised by autocracy, industrialisation, democratisation and globalisation, as previously described in the unfolding of the four phases. Over time, the military profession seems to be capable of adapting professional values to societal change without giving up values inherited from previous phases. In this way, the profession simultaneously integrates and separates itself from the society, so allowing the emergence of a distinct professional self-understanding.

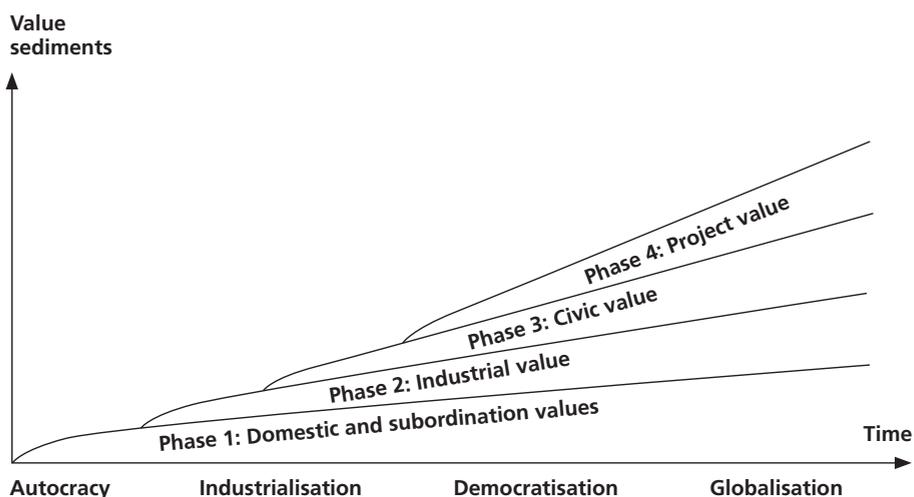


Figure 2. Sediment layers of Values in Military Officership.

It does not seem that the loss or the acquisition of core professional values is a reflection of changes in wider society but is, rather, generated autonomously. The following quotation from a Phase 3 evaluation exemplifies this in practice through a simultaneous appreciation of several values – domestic authority, industrial effectiveness and civic working relations – thereby drawing on sedimentary layers of values from Phases 1 to 3:

The lieutenant colonel is an extremely well-founded [industrial] officer with a pleasant nature, but at the same time an authoritative appearance [domestic]. He possesses a good portion of humour and a lot of humanity, and he has an appropriately well-controlled temperament. He understands ... how to build and maintain a good climate among his employees [civic]. (FOARK 8, Evaluation 1981)

Here, social qualities such as pleasantness, humour, humanity and self-control predominate, understood as capacities; the domestic authority is downgraded to the status of mere descriptor. As such, the quote reflects the tendency and priorities in Phase 3 evaluations.

The sedimented layers are also reflected in the formal evaluation categories as described above regarding FOKUS in Phase 4. Here, we experience a significant value displacement, with the tradition-based domestic value losing ground to the future-oriented project value. Indeed, the domestic value is entirely absent in the formal evaluation categories in FOKUS. While the argument could be made that it has been replaced by project qualities, the implementation of FOKUS offers only a partial explanation, since free text sections of the evaluations made by the officers themselves between 1989 and 2015 reveal that displacement had already begun. A survey of the entire stock of colonel and naval captain evaluations demonstrates that the evaluating officers themselves turn to project qualifiers, increasingly avoiding domestic qualifiers (Holsting, 2017, p. 181; Holsting & Damkjær, 2020, p. 99); project qualifiers like flexibility, mobility, adaptability and coordination have gained ground; domestic qualifiers like authority and honour appear much less frequently (if, as the quotation from the evaluation attests, they do not disappear completely). This displacement continues, however, and the project value may very well become the predominant value of officership in the future – which would be remarkable, given that the domestic value has always formed a core part of officership, whereas the project value only has emerged in Phase 4.

Should this worry us? Or is it simply a logical and necessary consequence of the military profession's adaptation to a new context of increasing technological sophistication, diversity and change? Does the gradual displacement of the traditional domestic value express an increasing ability to look ahead and to integrate the leaders and actors of tomorrow? Or are we experiencing a dilution of the heroic officer trusted by society and willingly followed by soldiers? Certainly, these are important questions requiring further examination – but taking the sedimentary value perspective into consideration, the profession's response to societal change can be understood to be conservative, notwithstanding its inherent adaptability.

It is difficult to determine exactly what has been the main driver of value displacement. As we have seen, both military conditions and general requirements for public management have challenged traditional hierarchical conceptions and motivated a more agile, holistic and future-oriented transformation. Anthony King (2019, p. 20), for instance, claims the existence of a historically distinctive commandship in the 21st century in which “commanders, partners, deputies and subordinates, have begun to manage complex, heterogeneous contemporary operations”; Stanley McChrystal (2015), similarly, stresses the transition from command to team effort in order to handle the increased speed and frequent disruptions of operations. Even Bernard Bass (2009, p. 288), a defender of a universal and traditional approach to the ideals of officership, acknowledges that “individualized considerations, as well as transformational leadership, would be important in establishing and maintaining the cohesiveness needed for [military] success.” Remarkably, none of the authors reject the significance of traditional values, even while stressing the emerging ones. Management scientists, meanwhile, have identified several coexisting, even overlapping, management paradigms in contemporary public management in Denmark (Andersen, Greve, Klausen & Torfig, 2020, p. 166). The sedimentary understanding of officership seems, therefore, to reflect most accurately the historical development while accounting for the increased complexity of values in today’s officership.

The *longue durée* sedimentary approach used in this study offers an in-depth perspective which questions the usual myth of professional decline occurring every time core professional values are challenged. The empirical material demonstrates that the professional systems described are fully capable of managing and implementing new values without annulling those already existing. This pragmatic ability may be the very reason that a profession is capable of both adapting to future requirements and, as long as they are still needed in practice, maintaining existing qualities.

Returning to the initial discussion of whether military values are unique or general, universal or temporal, the analysis indicates that such distinctions are too simplistic in the sedimentary perspective. The officers’ applications of evaluation systems indicate a continuous process of reprofessionalisation serving to integrate an increasing number of values. As stressed by Williams (2008), however, this increase in complexity and in what he perceives as cultural relativism also creates serious challenges to traditional military culture. In this there is a latent risk of simplistic responses to societal development, which may appear easier to understand. This is an issue deserving more attention.

Concluding Remarks

The modern officer corps has emerged as a professional community founded on distinct constellations of professional values through a historical process originating, at the latest, in an autocratic society. These values are, however, closely tied to developments in society at large. Four general phases have been identified, each with distinct professional and societal implications and holding to very different types of the ideal officer. Professional military values seem to correspond with societal changes regarding domestic, industrial, civic and project values, while simultaneously insisting on values of execution, sacrifice and subordination at all times. The diachronic emergence of values demonstrates a continuous process of re-professionalisation characterised by a sedimentary accumulation of what, in principle, might appear to be incommensurable values. Through this process, the relation of the officer to the surrounding society is tightened while core professional qualities are maintained. Returning to the diverse understandings of military values as either unique or general, universal or temporal, an empirically informed response requires we acknowledge that, if military values are closely related to societal development, the way in which they are integrated is very distinct.

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Appendix: List of archives of historical performance evaluations

The appendix shows an overview of archive entries examined in the Armed Forces Archives (FOARK) at the National Archives for charting historical officer assessment systems. Each archive unit is listed with both a unique serial number, which I use as a source reference, and the National Archives identification information, which can be used in a search in the National Archive's database, Daisy. Some archive series are classified and therefore require the approval of the National Archives and the Armed Forces. This applies to number 2, 3, 6, 7 and 8.

Reference numbers in this article	Military Archives (FOARK) Specification of archival units representing the empery of the study
FOARK 1	Archive unit: Admiralitets- og Kommissariatskollegiet, Bogholder-, arkiv- og depechekontoret Archival series: Officersbedømmelser eller konduiteprotokoller (1756–1843) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record number: 917, Content: konduiteprotokoller 1756–1788
FOARK 2	Archive unit: Krigsministeriet/ Forsvarsministeriet Archival series: Officersforfremmelsesbedømmelser for officerer udtrådt af aktiv tjeneste ca. 1900–1980 (Classified) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record number: 1 (Package 1, Officersforfremmelsesbedømmelser 1880–1980), Content: From Aab to All
FOARK 3	Archive unit: Forsvarsministeriet Archival series: Personelbedømmelser for Flyvevåbnet, født 1932–1933 (1932–1993) (Classified) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record number: 1, Content: From Aa to Ab
FOARK 4	Archive unit: Marineministeriet, Sekretariats- og Kommandokontoret Archival series: Forfremmelsesbedømmelser for søofficerer (1815–1927) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record number: 1a, Content: From 1860 to 1920
FOARK 5	Archive unit: Marineministeriet, Sekretariats- og Kommandokontoret Archival series: Forfremmelsesbedømmelser for søofficerer (1815–1927) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record number: 9, Content: From 1906 to 1927
FOARK 6	Archive unit: Marineministeriet, Sekretariats- og Kommandokontoret (Forsvarsministeriet) Archival series: (kontraadmiraler, kommandører, mm) Record number: 228 (Package 228) (Classified) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Package 228: Kontraadmiraler, kommandører, m.m. , Content: From 1939 to 1967
FOARK 7	Archive unit: Marineministeriet, Sekretariats- og Kommandokontoret (Forsvarsministeriet) Archival series: (kontraadmiraler, kommandører, mm) Record number: 231 (Package 231) (Classified) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Package 231: Kommandørkaptajner, Content: From 1924 to 1969
FOARK 8	Archive unit: Forsvarets Arkiver (FOARK), Militære personelfortegnelser Archival series: Forfremmelsesbedømmelser – Hæren (officerer) 1980–2000 (Classified) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record number: 1, Content: From Aa to Am
FOARK 9	Archive unit: Marineministeriet, Sekretariats- og Kommandokontoret Archival series: Søofficersbedømmelser <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record number 2, Content 1036–1261 (From 1809 to 1938)

Appendix

Reference numbers in this article	Military Archives (FOARK) Specification of archival units representing the empery of the study – <i>continued</i>
FOARK 10	Archive unit: Krigskollegiet, Krigskancelliet Archival series: Konduitelister <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record number: 1818, Content 1730–1733 (From 1730 to 1899)
FOARK 11	Archive unit: Krigsministeriet Archival series: Forfremmelseslister <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record number: 18, Content: 1868 Officerer ved Generalstaben m.m. (From 1869 to 1909)
FOARK 12	Archive unit: Krigsministeriet, Archival series: Konduite- og avancementslister (1764–1849) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record number: 16, Content: 1853, 1856, 1857, 1860 and 1866
FOARK 13	Archive unit: Krigsministeriet Archival series: Konduite- og avancementslister (1764–1849) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record number: 14, Content: Konduitelister 1847 Samtlige afdelinger og korps med flere
FOARK 14	Archive unit: Krigsministeriet Archival series: Konduite- og avancementslister (1764–1849) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record number: 1, Content: 1764
FOARK 15	Archive unit: Marineministeriet, Sekretariats- og Kommandokontoret Archival series: Søofficersbedømmelser (1809–1938) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record number: 1, Content: Søofficersbedømmelser from 1807 to 1869
FOARK 16	Archive unit: Marineministeriet, Sekretariats- og Kommandokontoret Archival series: Konduite- og forfremmelseslister for skibschefer (from 1848 to 1885) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record number: 1, Content: From 1848 to 1871
FOARK 17	Archive unit: Krigsministeriet Archival series: Konduite- og avancementslister (From 1764 to 1849) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record number: 17, Content: Konduitelister 1867
FOARK 18	Archive unit: Marineministeriet, Sekretariats- og Kommandokontoret Archival series: Forfremmelsesbedømmelser for søofficerer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record number: 8, Content: 1848–1851, 1864, 1871, 1875, 1882 and 1886–1905
FOARK 19	Archive unit: Søkrigskancelliet (Søetaten), Admiralitets- og Kommissariatskollegiet, Bogholder-, arkiv- og depechekontoret Archival series: Konduitelister (1755–1843) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record number: 916, Content: From 1830 to 1843

Reference numbers in this article	Military Archives (FOARK) Specification of archival units representing the empery of the study – <i>continued</i>
FOARK 20	Archive unit: Søkrigskancelliet (Søetaten), Admiralitets- og Kommissariatskollegiet, Bogholder, arkiv- og depechekontoret Archival series: Konduitelister (1755–1843) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record number 915, Content: From 1810 to 1829
FOARK 21	Archive unit: Søkrigskancelliet (Søetaten), Admiralitets- og Kommissariatskollegiet, Bogholder, arkiv og depechekontoret Archival series: Officersbedømmelser eller konduiteprotokoller (from 1756 to 1843) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record number: 919b, Content: Mandskabsbedømmelser from 1833 to 1843
FOARK 22	Archive unit: Søkrigskancelliet (Søetaten), Admiralitets- og Kommissariatskollegiet, Bogholder, arkiv- og depechekontoret Archival series: Konduitelister (From 1755 to 1843) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record number: 914, Content: From 1800 to 1809
FOARK 23	Archive unit: Krigsministeriet Archival series: Konduite- og avancementslister (1764–1849) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record number: 6, Content: Konduitelister for annekterede batailloners officerer From 1808 to 1809 and 1814 m.m.

10. Twisting the Pedagogy in Military Education – Experiences Drawn from a Problem-based Teaching Approach at the Norwegian Defence University College

Rino Bandlitz Johansen, Anders McD Sookermany & Geir Isaksen

I have noticed over the past several years that there is an increasing dissonance between what we are doing with regards to training and education, and what we need to be doing based on the evolving operating environment. Specifically, many of our schools and training venues are based in the “lecture, memorize facts, regurgitate facts on command” model of industrial age training and education. ... What we need is an information age approach that is focused on active, student-centered learning using a problem-posing methodology where our students/trainees are challenged with problems that they tackle as groups in order to learn by doing, and also from each other. We must enable them to think critically, recognize when change is needed and inculcate a bias for action without waiting to be told what to do. – General David H Berger, Commander US Marine Corps, (United States Marine Corps (2019)

Above, General Berger of the U.S. Marine Corps raises fundamental questions about the inadequacies of military education. Believing military pedagogy to be unsatisfactory in its current state, he both calls for reforms and offers solutions founded on the implementation of more appropriate teaching methods, to be supported by developments in educational technologies affording broader and more rapid information sharing, networking, and access to an increasing number of decentralised knowledge sites. It is worth noting, however, that learning technologies are not always well grounded in pedagogical principles (Scoppio & Covell, 2016) and the development and application of satisfactory pedagogy is on the agenda of professional military education (PME) in both non-Western and NATO nations (Duraud & Annen, 2019; Hamilton, 2019; Walker, 2006). These factors mentioned above push the armed forces towards a more efficient type of education, harmonised with the civilian system. Norwegian military educators have addressed the ways in which appropriate learning philosophies might be developed (Isaksen, 2019; Sookermany, 2017; Torgersen & Herner, 2015). One notable example of a shift in educational practice is the newly implemented educational strategy for the Norwegian Defence University College (Norwegian Defence University College, 2019a), presenting changes in both learning outcomes and existing pedagogy. Among its solutions, the strategy suggests that problem-based learning (PBL), or more student-active teaching methods, could be a mean to meet some of those challenges.

PBL can be described as “an instructional (and curricular) learner-centred approach that empowers learners to integrate theory and practice, applying knowledge and skills to develop a viable solution to a defined problem” (Savery, 2006). The underlying philosophy is that learning ought to be considered a constructive, self-directed, collaborative and contextual activity (Dolmans, De Grave, Wolfhagen & Van der Vleuten, 2005). This accords both with the fundamental principles of military education suggested by Goode (2019) and with the collective nature of the military profession itself (Caforio, 2006). PBL serves as a vehicle for acquiring better problem-solving skills while laying the groundwork for new information to be acquired through self-directed learning (Bishop & Verleger, 2013; Car et al., 2019). PBL also fits the collective nature of the military profession when it comes to operating in groups, depending on mutual trust and high levels of collaboration in the creation and solution of operational issues, whilst constantly in the process of “learning to learn.”

If PBL might be considered a method advantageous for military education, however, a review of the literature reveals conspicuously few empirical studies for this specific application. With its origin and impact in health care education, the few extant studies of PBL in a military context largely focus on medical perspec-

tives, and only sporadically on the digital and Virtual Reality domain. The degree to which PBL could be beneficial in other core domains of military education – command, leadership and operations, for example – appears to be less explored, particularly through empirical study. The purpose of this study, then, is to provide more empirical material on the subject and a more systematic view on the use of PBL in military education. By using an explorative design, we investigate how the principles of PBL affect learning outcomes among executive Master's students following the Military Leadership (ML) course at the Norwegian Defence University College (NDUC).

The study is framed as a pilot. This is a methodically conscious choice allowing us to take an explorative approach rather than merely serving to confirm existing knowledge. Going into the pilot project, we envisioned several potential contributions. First, to widen the theoretical and empirical field of military education and learning, including the forming of new educational hypotheses pertaining to a military environment; second, if PBL were found to bring positive effects such as enhanced learning, our findings could pave the way for introducing more appropriate and differentiated pedagogical methods (beyond the field of health care) into military education; third, to inspire further exploration of and thoughts about fruitful ways to pedagogically improve military education in the years to come.

The study's findings may also be relevant beyond a purely military setting – to practical MBAs (Mintzberg 2004) and other executive studies, for example. Despite the fact that the study is performed in a Norwegian context, the contributions should apply to professional military education in general. Based on the above, the following two basic questions, organised into two separate sections, were pursued: did we succeed in providing a problem-based, student-centric teaching method? Did the change in pedagogy enhance learning outcomes for the students?

Theoretical and Empirical Framework

Military Education: Leadership, Planning and Conduct Of Operations

Professional education is a prerequisite for a successful military organisation (Gleiman & Zacharakis, 2016). Since both the planning and execution of military operations are characterised by uncertainty, military students must be prepared for the unpredictable (Torgersen & Herner, 2015; Sookermany, 2017). The leadership philosophy of contemporary armed forces relies on the principle of mission

command, according to which all missions and tasks must be viewed in the light of the commanders' intent (Behn-Shalom & Shamir, 2011; Norwegian Defence University College, 2019b; Jacobsen, 1993). For mission command to be effective, its underlying principles must be variously recognised, learned and trained in the course both of education and in the performance of operations. These principles revolve around the functioning of teams whose cohesion is established through a mutual trust affording both a shared, clear understanding of commander's intent and the exercise of disciplined initiative, following mission orders, with the acceptance of prudent risk (McBride & Snell, 2017). In the pursuit of these principles, the pedagogy forming both the basis of mission command and the planning and conduct of military operations may be considered, essentially, a question of teaching students to think in a critical and constructive way given the situation and the commander's intent.

In the recent military anthology "Pedagogy for the Unforeseen," Torgersen and Herner (2015) argue that the learning objective is not the solution of any designated problem; it is, rather, both how the students reason before they arrive at a decision and their ability to elaborate on, and defend, their choices. This understanding is clearly reflected in the description of the overall learning outcome for the Master's of Military Study Programme (MoMS) at NDUC, where the development of the students' analytical and problem-solving skills is emphasised (Norwegian Defence University College, 2019d). In this respect, the proper choice of pedagogic design is critical. Ideally, it should support mutual goals. As such, the teaching method of PBL, through its emphasis on problem elaboration and relevant processes of analysis, may be expected to add value to military education, not only to the deeper learning of any particular subject, but to the enhancement of mission command and the planning and conduct of operations – especially when it comes to the analysis of complex operational problems and the development of alternative causes of action (Shamir, 2011).

Problem-Based Learning

In the literature, problem-based learning as a concept seems increasingly popular and does not necessarily refer to a specific or formalised educational method. In their *Handbook of Problem Based Learning*, Wijnia, Lovens and Rikers (2019) argue that it is not possible to identify any "ideal" model of PBL. Nevertheless, Savery (2006) has attempted to define PBL as "an instructional (and curricular) learner-centred approach that empowers learners to integrate theory and practice, applying knowledge and skills to develop a viable solution to a defined problem." In contrast to PBL, Barrows (2002) defined traditional learning approaches

to be “large-class, instructor-driven, lecture-based deliveries within a curriculum, which compartmentalized the content.”

Acknowledging that problem-based learning is not strictly defined, theorists and researchers still agree on a set of principles and characteristics: the method is understood to be student-centred, for example, and learning occurs in small groups; the role of the teacher is to facilitate learning activities rather than to simply impart information; the approach stimulates learning by obliging students to organise themselves; it promotes the attainment of improved problem-solving skills, and lays the groundwork for new information to be obtained through self-directed learning (Car et al., 2019; Bishop & Verleger, 2013). PBL appeals to many educators because it offers a framework supporting active and group learning, considered an ideal in military education. As PBL offers opportunities for problem-solving in a collaborative setting and creates mental models for learning and forming self-directed learning habits through practice and reflection (Palinscar, 1998), we see clear parallels between PBL and the structure of military planning doctrines. Barrows (1996) highlighted five expected positive outcomes for students subjected to PBL:

1. The development of flexible knowledge.
2. The development of effective problem-solving skills.
3. Augmented self-directed learning skills.
4. Augmented collaboration skills.
5. The encouragement of intrinsic motivation for the learning process.

Is Problem-Based Learning Working?

The teaching method of PBL has been used in many disciplines for nearly four decades (Savery, 2006). Research comparing the effectiveness of PBL to more conventional teaching approaches is somewhat mixed and inconclusive (Wong & Lam, 2007). In a meta-analysis of 43 studies, Dochy, Segers, Van den Bossche & Gijbels (2003) concluded that PBL consistently helped students in skills-related outcomes. Savery (2006) found that students almost universally reported high levels of satisfaction with PBL courses and repeatedly stated that they generally preferred this method over traditional approaches. Studies on the effectiveness of PBL have largely focused on the field of medicine (Yew & Goh, 2016), especially nursing and health care. In their meta-analysis, Shin and Kim (2013) revealed that PBL had positive effects on student satisfaction in training, clinical education, and skills development. When reviewing literature on the method's effect on students' critical thinking, Oja (2011) found a positive relationship between the

implementation of PBL and improvements in critical reasoning. In a recent meta-analysis exploring the effects of PBL in pharmacology education, it was found that PBL played a role in the attainment of higher theoretical scores assessed through examinations (Liu, Du, Zhang & Zhou, 2009). Student feedback also showed that PBL was superior to conventional teaching methods in improving outcomes of self-study, learning interest, team spirit, problem solving, analytical skills, scope of knowledge, communication and expression. In their meta-analysis, Strobel and van Barneveld (2009) pointed to PBL being significantly more effective than traditional instruction for training competent and skilled practitioners and for encouraging the long-term retention of knowledge and skills acquired during the learning experience or training session.

A review of the literature reveals a surprising scarcity of studies, particularly empirical studies, addressing the military context. In their study mapping trends in pedagogical approaches to military education, Scoppio and Covell (2016) suggest that institutions of advanced military education receive scrutiny and pressure to adapt to pedagogical trends in order to become “learning organisations” that create meaningful learning situations. From a Norwegian perspective, a technical report from the Army War Academy (Skaug 2008) explored teaching and learning strategies in military officer education. While the report concluded that to a large extent PBL supported the education and development of responsible and independent leaders, until recently those conclusions appear to have been somewhat ignored. More rigorous research is therefore needed to further examine the effects of PBL on student learning outcomes and performance in military education. From a Swedish perspective, Andersson, Lundberg, Jonsson, Tingström and Dahlgren (2013) argue that the Swedish armed forces have used a problem-oriented approach as their educational model since 1998, referring to the Swedish armed forces textbook on pedagogical fundamentals. We have not, however, found empirical studies exploring problem-based learning in a Scandinavian military context.

Framing the Pilot

The Norwegian Defence University College is the primary provider of professional military education at the master degree level in Norway. A Military Leadership course on the Master’s of Military Science programme was used as a pilot case. Teaching methods were changed from more traditional practices to those aligned with the principles of PBL and the flipped classroom, allowing us the opportunity to both tap into new experiences and to compare the pilot with what we had learned from previous courses in military leadership. Flipped classroom

is a type of blended learning where students are introduced to content at home and practice working through it at school. This is the reverse of the more common practice of introducing new content at school, then assigning homework and projects to be completed by the students independently at home. Theoretically, PBL can be modelled as an ongoing process that normally consists of three phases: problem-presentation and analysis; self-directed learning; and synthesis and reporting (Yew & Goh, 2016). Figure 1 shows how these phases were structured in the pilot.

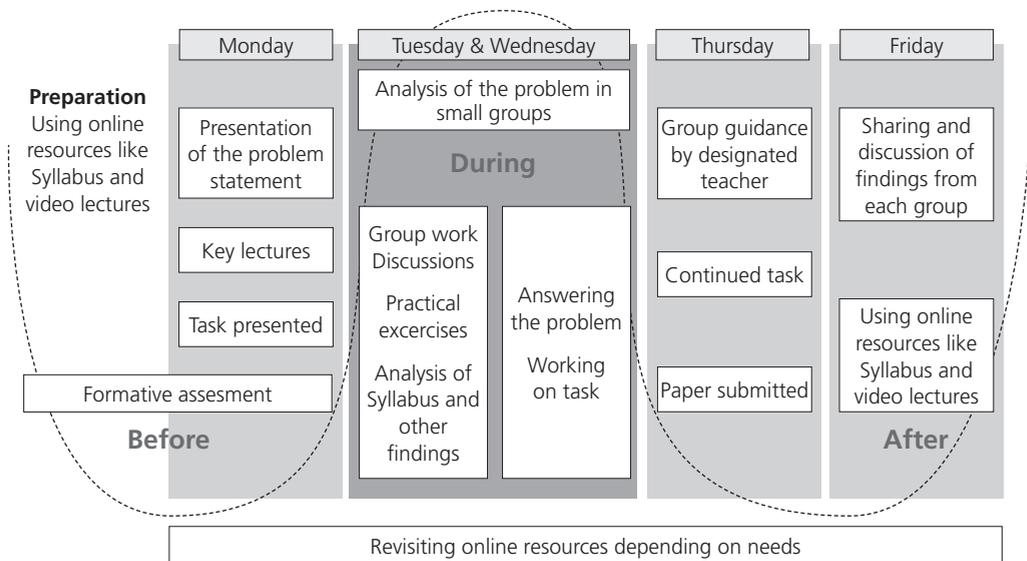


Figure 1: PBL model for the ML course.

Comparing Learning Methodology in the Military Leadership Course – Framing The Pilot

Predefined learning outcome descriptions developed according to the European Qualification Framework (EQF) and the National Qualification Framework for Lifelong Learning (NKR) are the foundation of all education at NDUC (Norwegian Department of Education, 2011), and form the basis for designing a pedagogical model, developing learning activities and assessments. The LODs for the Military Leadership course contain both knowledge and skill descriptions, meaning that students should acquire a predefined level of knowledge within the subject while developing problem-solving and analytical skills.

The six-week Military Leadership course has traditionally been based on a long-established pedagogical model in line with the definition of Barrows (2002).

Usually 33% of the time is used for classroom lectures, while 42% of the time is set aside for the students to individually read and work with a predefined syllabus. Of the remaining time, 10% is normally used to facilitate group activities and 15% is reserved for written and oral summative assessment (Isaksen, 2019). The main difference in the 2019 curriculum compared with that of 2018 was the increased time set aside for group collaboration (47%), which was achieved by reducing classroom lectures to 9% and individual study time to 28% of the course.

The use of a weekly “problem” was the main pillar of the learning activities in the new pedagogical model. Five problems, one for each of the five first weeks and all based on the predefined learning outcome descriptions, were constructed and attached to a mandatory work requirement. As recommended by Fukuzawa, Boyd and Cahn (2017), short weekly problems were thus chosen instead of prolonged projects, following the framework of Barret and Moore (2011). Each of the six student groups were collectively responsible for developing and submitting a written paper answering the problem, thus serving as a weekly formative assessment tool. The mandatory syllabus was considerably reduced to about 500 pages, leaving the students to identify and add about 300 suitable pages following their own judgment.

Each Monday was set aside for key plenary lectures, summarising the previous week’s problem and clarifying the upcoming problem. Every Tuesday and Wednesday, the students decided their learning process for themselves in six designated groups, working on their assigned problem without any teachers present. Thursday was reserved for group-based feedback and guidance before submission of the required paper in the afternoon. An article seminar was also conducted within each group in which the students discussed and criticised different articles relating to the weekly problem. The last day of the week was used to prepare for the upcoming week by reading the syllabus and accessing online video lectures in the Learning Management System (LMS). It was made clear to students from the beginning of the course that the oral exam would be based on one of the five problems tackled during the five weeks. This exercise secures a direct link between the LOD, learning activities and the examination.

Methods and Materials

We pursued two relatively broad interconnected research questions: did we succeed in constructing (and conducting) a problem-based, student-centric teaching method? And did the change in pedagogy enhance learning outcomes and contribute to any positive outcomes? On one hand, we wanted to learn and understand more about the students’ experiences, thoughts, expectations, motives and attitudes to

generate ideographic knowledge about the pedagogy of problem-based learning and its link to learning outcomes. According to Kraiger, Ford & Salas (1993), learning outcomes can be categorised as affective-, cognitive- or skill-based. The affective domain is also one of three domains in *Bloom's Learning Taxonomy* (Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill & Krathwohl, 1956) and includes how we cope with things emotionally – feelings, for example; values, appreciation, enthusiasm, motivation and attitudes. We also wanted to investigate learning outcomes from the cognitive- and skill-based domains, including measurable and objective variables.

We thus chose to have a pragmatic and explorative approach to our data sources. To collect, systemise and analyse the data gathered from the study, principles of mixed methods were applied, which allowed us to make use of both qualitative and quantitative methodological approaches and measures. This implied integration of those two components through both data collection, analyses and results. These different perspectives on knowledge also allowed a broader and more complete understanding of the subject under scrutiny (Mertens, 2011).

Qualitative Approach

A qualitative approach allowed the method to materialise as a dynamic process, where the objects of the study were observable during and after the research process (Gentikow, 2005). We employed several types of qualitative approach. Direct and indirect observations made by teachers, supervisors, seminar leaders and staff during the course were collected continuously, discussed and systemised throughout the course. These observations were based on group discussions, informal conversations with the students, colleagues and so forth. From the students' own final course evaluation, we extracted and systematised the free text material. The same approach was conducted with both the College's formal student evaluation and the formal report provided by the course director. Immediately after the oral exam, we gathered all the external examiners to present and discuss their experiences of the examination as input to the analysis.

Quantitative Measures

The quantitative approach let us use available statistical data (Gentikow, 2005). Several forms of quantitative measures were employed, allowing students to respond anonymously; these measured different aspects of their impressions and experience of, and their attitudes towards, the course, with emphasis on relevance and outcome of a problem-based learning strategy. As we did not employ vali-

dated scales, reliability procedures were not used (Cortina, 1993). The following questionnaires were employed.

- a. A standard feedback evaluation consisting of 16 questions with mixed closed and open-ended items, measuring different aspects of the students' attitudes and experience before, during and after the course. The questionnaire tapped both administrative, pedagogical and professional aspects of the course and is a standardised part of the quality assessment system at the NDUC.
- b. A questionnaire to specifically measure the students' attitudes towards PBL and how it influenced their learning outcomes. The questions were asked on two occasions: immediately prior to the beginning of the course, and immediately after the course ended.
- c. A questionnaire measuring the extent to which the leadership course offered problem-based teaching in comparison with two other completed courses – Scientific Methods (SM) and Politics, Strategy and Military Power (PSM).
- d. Additionally, we retrieved and analysed different kinds of statistics available from the Learning Management System (LMS) "Itslearning."

Description of the Course Population – Students at NDUC

The course comprised 52 students primarily with a military background; four were civilians, five were foreign military exchange students. Of the students, 15% were women and the rest were men. The average age was 39 years, with the youngest 36 and the oldest 47. Besides being a formally accredited Master's degree programme, the Master's of Military Study programme at the NDUC is, in military terms, a command and staff education functioning as a de facto rite of passage for students set for future higher leadership positions in the military. This implies that, in general, the students have considerable experience from previous leadership positions and are carefully selected based on their potential as future high-level leaders. Representing a highly select group with above-average potential and skills, we expected the students to take responsibility for their own learning, thereby favouring PBL as a learning method. This follows the claim made by Tough (1971) that self-directed learning (SDL) springs from an independent and adult learning context, and Garrison's definition of SDL as an approach where learners are motivated to assume personal responsibility and collaborative control over the cognitive and contextual process (Garrison, 1997).

Did we Succeed in Providing a Problem-based, Student-centric Teaching Method?

Students' Perceptions of Problem-Based Teaching

Initially we selected three questions from the students' standard feedback evaluation (see Table 1 below) to explore the degree to which the students had experienced a PBL learning context during the course. The questions measured occurrence of student-active learning activities, how the pedagogy fit the learning objectives and whether the students participated actively during the course.

Selected course feedback questions from the students	Very high	High	Med	Low	Very low
<i>To what degree do you experience that the course structure facilitated student-active learning activities (e.g. group work, reflection and seminars)?</i>	22%	58%	10%	6%	4%
<i>To what degree do you find the pedagogy to be in line with the learning objectives in the course?</i>	20%	55%	13%	7%	5%
<i>To what degree have you participated actively in the learning environment during the course?</i>	15%	71%	8%	3%	3%

Table 1: Responses from the students on selected standardised feedback questions (N = 32).

About 80% of the respondents experienced a high to very high degree of student-active learning activities, and of having participated actively in the learning environment during the course. In addition, 75% of the respondents found to a high or very high degree that the pedagogy fit the learning objectives. The results, then, express the fact that the course was constructed to promote a problem-based, student-centric teaching method.

PBL is employed, importantly, with a view to the augmentation of the student's analytical abilities and problem-solving skills (Car et al., 2019; Bishop & Verleger, 2013; Wood, 2003). The student should also be given opportunities to solve problems in a collaborative setting, to create mental models for learning and to form self-directed learning habits through practice and reflection (Hmeilo-Silver, 2004; Norman & Schmidt, 2004). In addition, critical thinking, problem-solving and analytical skills are a prerequisite for both the understanding and application of mission command and the planning and conduct of military operations (Norwegian Defence University College 2019b). We therefore asked

the students the following question: “To what degree would you say the teaching method and learning activities in each subject facilitated problem-solving and analysis skills?” The question made it possible to both gather experiences from the ML course and to search for possible differences compared to the other two courses conducted during the first semester (Politics, Strategy and Military Power, and Scientific Methods).

The results offered different interpretations. The majority of the students (close to 70% of respondents) reported that the ML course itself offered many or very good opportunities to exercise problem-solving and analytical skills, which indicates that PBL took place in line with the expectations of Wood (2003). The students also found that the course offered more opportunities to exercise problem-solving and analytical skills than the other two courses. These differences are interesting: as the other two courses did not base their pedagogy on PBL, we might expect the students to more easily recognise the pedagogical differences.

The Curriculum

Experiences from PBL indicate that students work actively to acquire knowledge far beyond that of the mandatory curriculum, and collaboration in groups of five to six people improves the breadth and the quality of knowledge they acquire (Bekkhus, Samuelsen, & Gulbrandsen, 2009). Students also tend to conduct more critical interpretations of material that they select independently (Garrison, 1997). Based on these assumptions, we reduced the mandatory curriculum and allowed the students to collect and apply 300 pages of literature pages themselves, which facilitated increased collaboration and self-directed learning.

During the course, feedback from the librarians indicated that the students drew on the library services significantly more than for the previously completed courses. Asking for further clarification, we learned that the students now asked for, and were assisted with, online search strategies and means of both evaluating the quality of literature and of systemising their findings. The students also used the library as a physical place for one-to-one or small group discussions, addressing both the course literature and academic issues in general with fellow students, teachers and librarians.

The Magic of Group Work?

The nature of armed forces as collectives points to the necessity of working together in groups. It is also reflected in the Norwegian Armed Forces Governing Principles of Pedagogy (Norwegian Defence University College, 2007), which underlines

that the learner must be challenged to use their own experiences, conduct critical interpretations and cooperate with others. Student evaluations from several years ago reveal “more time available for group work” to be the most common topic for improvement of the different courses. Johnson, Johnson and Holubec (2008) suggested that group work can be termed “cooperative learning,” defined as the instructional use of small groups to promote students working together to maximise their personal and collective learning. If teachers want their group work experience to succeed, the creation of a group atmosphere where these rules can be followed by all group members should be one of their foremost goals.

The six primary groups observed in the Military Leadership course had been functioning from the beginning of the August term, so the premise had, to a certain extent, already been set and the students had three months of prior experience of working together. We observed first-hand that students spent a substantial amount of time in their primary groups, often beyond normal working hours. Other smaller mixed groups were also formed for discussions and the exchange of knowledge. A question from the students’ feedback evaluation supported these observations by indicating that the students spent about 50% more time working in groups this year compared with the three previous years in the Military Leadership course. This must be regarded as a significant increase and indicates a positive learning experience related to group work itself, working to foster intrinsic motivation (Harun et al., 2012). In another open-ended question from the questionnaire, we asked the students to describe which learning activities motivated them to actively participate in the learning situation. The opportunity to work in groups and to manage their own time stood out as the most prominent responses.

Besides substantiating the perceived essence and value of group work, the statements also raised other important aspects of PBL. The quotations revealed dynamics in the students’ learning process and reflections on how they actually learned and took responsibility for their own learning. They also coincide with how Garrison (1997) defines SDL, where the learners are motivated to assume personal responsibility and collaborative control over the cognitive and contextual process in constructing and confirming meaningful and worthwhile learning outcomes. The responses also indicated that the study climate in the groups allowed students to propose and discuss a variety of questions targeting the same idea or problem. According to Pan and Rickard (2018) this could support the development of flexible knowledge.

Even though the students embraced group work, responses were not unequivocally positive: during the course, some of the students reported directly to our faculty what they experienced as dysfunctional group processes. Typically, resourceful students took control of the working progress, initiating structure and

excluding the less resourceful from full participation. Several students mentioned this as a degrading experience. It was emphasised by Johnson et al. (2008) that for a collaboration to work well, equality, mutuality and the creation of meaning that leads to shared understanding must be emphasised. Members of the group must also contribute equally to improve the group's overall understanding of the problem under scrutiny. In their study, Justo, Vazquez-Bosa and Trujillo (2016) argued that uneven participation of group members in group tasks was a common weakness in applications of PBL.

We also observed elements of internal competition at group level. This was to some extent to be expected as both our previous experience and the demographic characteristics of the students suggested a competitive environment. The question of whether or not competition in education can be considered beneficial remains controversial from a research perspective. But the general consensus in the literature, it would seem, is that cooperation is to be preferred to competition since these characteristics are often, but not always, viewed as being opposites (Hattie, 2009). In their study on interventions in dysfunctional learning groups, Hitchcock and Andersen (1997) suggested several improvement strategies, among which were the early establishment of ground rules, directly addressing conflict as it arises, and strategic interventions designed to foster positive group development. How to establish, develop and maintain well-functioning study groups is a subject which should be followed up in later courses and programmes.

Motivation

According to social learning theory, as the individual must be motivated to learn for actual learning to occur, the motivational and attitudinal component is crucial in education (Bandura, 1977; Bandura & Wood, 1989). Studies show that engagement and intrinsic motivation play a crucial role in a PBL context, both as antecedents and positive outcomes (Barrow 1997; Wijnen et al. 2018). As intrinsic motivation is based on autonomy, competence and relatedness (Douglass & Morris, 2014), collaboration, problem-solving and opportunities for critical thinking should be emphasised in the learning process (Murray & Summerlee, 2007). Following Fukuzawa, Boyd and Cahn (2017), it is fair to argue that intrinsic motivation will increase if the premises for PBL are met and they are linked to perceived learning outcomes. To measure aspects of intrinsic motivation, we inquired about the students' attitudes towards PBL and the concomitant impact on the learning outcomes.

Before the course started, students expressed relatively neutral or positive attitudes towards PBL and about the ways in which the teaching method would influ-

ence their learning outcomes. After the course, a significant number of students had moved from a neutral or positive to an even more positive position. Two thirds of the respondents were now either positive or very positive. When examining student motivation during problem-based learning implementation, Fukuzawa et al. (2017) found, in support of this change, that by the end of the course the majority of students (76.7%) found an increase in their motivation towards PBL. One way to interpret this general change in attitude is to view the responses as a positive reaction to learning experiences received during the course. Hughes et al. (2016) argued that reactions set the stage for more distal outcomes as they signal satisfaction: they serve as indicators of motivation to learn and may lead to other key outcomes in addition.

Does duration and subject matter expertise influence student motivation?

In their meta-analysis, Strobel and van Barnevald (2009) argued that PBL is significantly more effective than traditional instruction for both the training of competent and skilled practitioners and for the promotion of long-term retention of knowledge and skills acquired during the learning experience. This does not necessarily correlate with the application of PBL over time. Few studies seem concerned with the implications of duration. In our case, this issue is of particular interest since the length of the different courses at the NDUC vary by several weeks.

PBL requires intellectual creativity, which is hard work. By the end of the course, we became aware of a certain “PBL-fatigue” among the students. Random feedback from several students indicated that PBL was becoming more intense and stressful. With its requirement for changes in theoretical approaches and applications of new or different mental models, shifting focus each week to a new subject and problem became increasingly demanding. After four to five weeks, many of the students had obviously reached the point of saturation.

One of the conclusions in the formal student evaluation highlighted that the application of PBL must be considered and adjusted, depending on the length of the course. With regard to motivation, Wijnen et al. (2018) refer to several studies showing that PBL is positively related to motivation when implemented for a short period of time (two to six weeks). The length of the ML course, five weeks, appeared to be a good fit, which may also explain the rise in positive attitudes to PBL among the students. Course duration is an important determinant for future planning and for the use of PBL as a teaching method. Further, the findings oblige us to consider the ways in which working with new and complex problems over time challenges creativity and can be intellectually exhausting; this should

remind us of the necessity of sustaining our cognitive reserves during military operations, which tend to become drawn out.

Did the Change in Pedagogy Contribute to any Positive Outcomes?

In the previous section, we found support for the application of a problem-based, student-centric learning method and discovered several avenues of further research. Our second research question explores the extent to which our pilot can be related to positive outcomes. Focusing on the students' academic achievements, here we consider their grades as an index of performance and learning outcomes, as elaborated by Campbell and Cabrera (2014) and Akçayır & Akçayır (2018).

Academic Achievements in the Individual Oral Exam

Since the Military Leadership course was the only course during the entire Master's programme to emphasise PBL and flipped classroom principles, we compared the results with the concurrent Strategy and Military Power course to compare any differences between the grades awarded. In PSM the grades were assessed and determined through a written paper. As the learning objectives in the ML course had remained the same for three years, we compared the pilot results with those of the three years before. To investigate possible group differences, we also aggregated and compared the results between the six basic learning groups in the pilot.

Compared with the PSM course and previous results from the ML course, the grades from the pilot appeared remarkably high, showing that above 50% of the students achieved top grades. A recent empirical study adds further context to these results, showing that in groups of students randomly assigned one of three educational conditions (PBL, lecture-based or self-study groups), students in the PBL group were likely to outperform those assigned the other conditions (Loyens, Jones and Mikkers, 2015). The results are also in line with Akçayır and Akçayır (2018), who suggested that PBL and flipped classroom could lead to learning improvements measured by course grades. It should be noted, however, that the two courses had different assessments (PSM paper, ML oral) which might influence the results.

Observations and Reflections from the Oral Exam

In pedagogical guidelines developed at Leeds Metropolitan University (Joughin, 2020), it is argued that the oral exam is particularly useful in revealing students' applied problem-solving abilities. Oral assessment can provide insight into students' cognitive processes, providing opportunities for students to critically reflect

on their work, reflecting the world of practice and improving learning. In this regard, our choice of assessment by oral exam appeared expedient. Four individual examination commissions were established, each consisting of one internal and one external examiner. Six of the examiners had taken part in the pilot and previous courses as educators and examiners.

During the exam, each student was asked to randomly draw one of the five problems tackled during the course. It was theoretically possible for every student to draw the same problem; each problem was, however, represented at least twice in every one of the four examination commissions. While students could use the whiteboard for their presentation, they received no up-front instruction or guidance about how to structure their answers. This was a deliberate decision to counteract the possibility of streamlining and cramming, as we assessed that this approach would contribute to discrimination between the grades and achievements. On the completion of the exam, a meeting with the commissions was arranged to share, discuss and summarise fresh experiences. These experiences were also collected and written in the examiners' reports as a part of the quality assurance system at the NDUC.

Generally, the results follow two paths. First, the examiners declared themselves impressed with the way in which the students tackled the problems they had discussed during the exam, particularly in relation to the demonstration of in-depth knowledge and analytical skills, and in their capacity for critical reflection on the problems. Secondly, the examiners observed that a significant number of students were surprised at their own achievements, and the results obviously surpassed their expectations. Interestingly, more students than usual appeared uncomfortable and showed significant signs of nervousness before and during the examination. The tendency to be more nervous in the face of oral assessments is highlighted by Huxam, Campbell and Westwood (2012). The format we introduced, the lack of a tight "drill" or structure for performance, obviously formed an unfamiliar examination situation. Trusting knowledge both previously gained and newly acquired, however, and applying it in new and unexpected situations, is a hallmark of the military profession. According to Pan and Rickard (2018), having flexible knowledge means that you are able to use what you already know in different ways. As such, the students may have demonstrated an increased level of flexible knowledge without really being aware of it.

Summary and Conclusions

We have presented above a research study exploring how the principles of PBL affected learning outcomes among Master's students following the Military Lead-

ership course at the NDUC. By framing the study as a pilot, we used an explorative approach which allowed us to detect new avenues and areas of research rather than simply pursuing and answering hypothesis-based questions. Two basic questions were pursued. Firstly, did we succeed in providing a problem-based, student-centric teaching method? Secondly, did the change in pedagogy enhance learning outcomes for the students?

Supported by the frameworks of Barrows (2002) and Savery (2006), we constructed a pilot in line with theoretical and empirical premises to reach a teaching pedagogy based on the principles of PBL. The use of a weekly “problem” derived from the predefined learning outcome descriptions became the main pillar of the learning activity and set the stage for extensive group work. Through feedback questions, reports and observations, we retrieved and analysed data indicating that the majority of the students benefitted from the course’s specific pedagogical apparatus. Group work, highly appreciated and embraced by most of the students, was probably the single largest contributor to their learning outcome. Our findings demonstrated how both well-functioning and less well-functioning groups may relate to important learning experiences and outcomes, whether it be sound and fruitful learning processes or individual examination results. Constructive group work probably contributed to the generation of flexible knowledge, effective problem-solving skills, self-directed learning and effective collaboration skills – several of the positive outcomes of PBL we might expect, according to Barrows (1996). On the other hand, one of the groups we studied in the pilot performed significantly less well than the others, reminding us that the specific constitution of the learning group may be significant, and that some groups may need tighter guidance than others. The establishment and maintenance of effective learning groups appears to be a crucial component in the application of PBL; this represents an important avenue for future research.

Motivation can be regarded as a key resource constituting both a precursor to, and a positive outcome of, PBL. Through our evaluation we discovered both an increase in the students’ positive attitudes towards the course and an augmentation in their motivation to learn; these were closely connected to the positive experiences of group work. Nevertheless, it is important to note that a certain number of students also experienced dysfunctional group processes, which adversely affected both learning environment and motivation alike. Course duration may also be a crucial factor in sustaining motivation when applying PBL. We noticed signs of “PBL fatigue” at the end of the course, indicating that the course length of five weeks was probably close to ideal. As previously stated, the course itself influenced students’ responses to the teaching methods applied. This

raises important questions concerning the ways in which PBL may be managed and exploited as a potential teaching method, while keeping in mind that it is not necessarily a “one size fits all” solution at a programme level.

What Can We Learn from this Study?

Despite the possible advantages offered by the teaching method of PBL in the context of military education, very few empirical studies have been conducted to further our understanding. Our study, thus, advances fresh empirical-based knowledge, widening both the theoretical and empirical field of education and learning, generally, and in the domain of military education more specifically. It supports previous studies and links PBL to positive outcomes while suggesting several further avenues of investigation. Some methodological shortcomings should, however, be mentioned. Being explorative in nature, conclusions regarding cause and effect should be considered tentative. Furthermore, the empirical studies we have used to support our findings are mainly drawn from non-military educational contexts; our findings being based on a military sample conducting military education, this should be taken into consideration when validating their applicability. Nevertheless, we propose PBL as an alternative or supplementary teaching method, especially relevant in military command and staff education.

It should also be noted that PBL enhances learning and skills particularly relevant for the application of both mission command and the planning and conduct of military operations, cornerstones of the military profession. Perhaps our study’s main contribution is to serve as an inspiration and a source for further exploration and elaboration regarding the future development of military and civilian executive management education.

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Transformations of the military profession and professionalism in Scandinavia

What characterises the development and social transformation of the military profession in the Scandinavian countries? Has the broadening of tasks, functions and scope of the military profession lead to changes in the values, outlook and behaviour of groups of the armed forces? What kind of changes are the cultural and structural interpenetration of civilian and military spheres, including hybrid forms of professionalism, generating? And what are the significance and implications of such changes?

This anthology is a collection of essays concerned with the military profession and professionalism in Denmark, Norway and Sweden.

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